

**Interim Report 2:**

**ESPORT Project Evaluation**

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## Executive summary

This Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) project commenced in late 2004, and was to conclude, after an extension, in August 2006. The purpose of the project was to provide training and counseling to entry-level employment low-literate adults, in regions of Canada experiencing chronic unemployment, through enhancement of clients' essential skills. The original partners were the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council Of Canada (AHRDCC), the Cape Breton Education Consortium, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labor (NLFL). An amendment to the project expanded access to the John Howard Society (Ottawa), Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre (Calgary), and Metis Employment Services, Region 3 (Calgary). As well, data and experience from the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert, was incorporated, although this site was not a formal part of the project, and was not a participant in the evaluation.

An advisory group (AG) of representatives of the funding and participating agencies and stakeholder groups was established. At this writing, the AG had met twice in Ottawa to review project plans and outcomes.

The evaluation was conducted using principles of *participatory action research* (PAR), incorporating on-site and online interviews and observations, surveys of various kinds (via telephone and e-mail), direct observations (on the part of the evaluators, the project manager, trainers, and participants), and records and reports generated by the ESPORT system.

Tentative findings of the project to date include the following:

- Usage of the system, though initially disappointing, rose steadily during the report period: at this time, a total of 12 sites in four provinces, 103 clients, and 51 facilitators have been involved in the project. ESPORT usage increased over 100% in the final quarter of 2005.
- Careers investigated by clients varied; the five most commonly appearing employment areas in the clients' portfolios were: business, construction, clerk

- (various), heritage and environmental, and nursery and greenhouse. Also included were health aide and health services, and retail.
- Facilitators reported that problems arose for many users over the time required (14 to 16 hours) to complete the ESPORT program. Suggestions for addressing this problem were offered, and are under investigation in the remainder of the project.
  - Changes were made to the training process to make the training more effective in preparing facilitators to implement ESPORT with clients in their home programs. Training outcomes and experiences were evaluated regularly, and evolved continually as the project proceeded.
  - Additional initiatives of opportunity were added to the project, as amendments were approved.
  - Other modifications enhancing the project and addressing needs or opportunities included: a virtual community of practice, to link users and exploit their growing experience with ESPORT; revisions and enhancements to materials and contents of ESPORT as suggested by users, including addition of a spell-checker to the system; provision of a searchable EARAT database; development of a utility to permit downloading and transfer of client ESPORT records (providing ready mobility for users); refinements to the standalone version (for the Prince Albert Penitentiary); provision of a Helpdesk for users during business hours; and planning for a French version of the system.
  - Questions about the future availability of PLATO, the computer-assisted learning program, were raised, and are subject to ongoing assessment.

This is the second interim report of the project; the final report will be available in fall 2006.

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3 **ESPORT Project Evaluation**

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17 **Project background and overview**

18 *Reporting history*

19 This is the second interim report of the ESPORT project; the *First Interim Report*  
20 was produced in July 2005 (Fahy, 2005). A full description of the project's origins and  
21 rationale, including an explanation for the evaluation methodology, is contained in the  
22 first report (available from the project manager). The following is a brief summary of  
23 pertinent background information from that report.

24 The ESPORT (*Essential Skills Portfolio*; initially, *ESCORT*) project formally  
25 commenced on October 17, 2004. The purpose of the project was described as follows:

26 The ESPORT Demonstration Project will evaluate, enhance, and promote an  
27 Internet-delivered, computer-mediated process designed to assist low-literate  
28 adults in choosing, qualifying for, and obtaining entry-level employment  
29 consistent with their interests and abilities. The project targets two of the groups  
30 identified in *Knowledge Matters* as sources of workers for the knowledge  
31 economy: youth and Aboriginal people, and a third group – displaced workers.  
32 ("Report to Advisors," November 7, 2004).



The project was to be conducted in four phases over the period October 2004 to May 2006. Participating programs, through funding provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC), were to be located in Cape Breton, Newfoundland, and in selected aboriginal communities in the West (Calgary, Vancouver). (As described later in this report, other sites commenced use of ESPORT during this period. Though these sites were in some cases not formally part of the project, they provided additional evaluation opportunities and experiences. Where these non-project sites are referenced, they are identified, and a brief program description is provided.)

The project was originally to consist of four phases:

1. Phase 1 (October 2004 to March 2005): Concept refinement and project development
2. Phase 2 (October 2004 to April 2005): Preparation for implementation
3. Phase 3 (October 2004 to May 2006): Project implementation
4. Phase 4 (June 2005 to May 2006): Reporting and dissemination of results

An extension of the project was authorized in late 2005, allowing sites that had only lately commenced operations to be included in the evaluation, and extending the completion to summer 2006.

## Partners

Planning, funding partners. The parties collaborating in the project consisted of the planning and funding partners, and the employment-related programs that provided facilitators (tutors, advisors) and clients ("Report to Advisors," 2004). The collaborating parties comprised:

- Cummins EP Consulting, Inc. (CEP), Patrick Cummins, president.
- PLATO Learning (Canada), Inc., Grant Bishop, general manager.
- TVLT New Media Language, Inc., Rob McBride, president.

- 60       ▪ P. Fahy Consulting (PFC), Patrick J. Fahy, PhD, president and project lead
- 61           evaluator.
- 62       ▪ Wallace Educational Research and Consulting, Mark Wallace, principal
- 63           consultant.
- 64       ▪ Activoweb, Peter Merritt, principal consultant.
- 65       ▪ Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. (HRSDC provided staff
- 66           to oversee the project, and to the agency on the Advisory Committee.)

67       Programming partners. The partnering programs in which ESPORT was to be  
 68 implemented and evaluated were chosen for their ability to provide an environment  
 69 consistent with ESPORT's objectives, staffed by skilled and experienced facilitators, and  
 70 serving clients with needs and goals that might benefit from ESPORT's presence.  
 71 ESPORT was intended to provide the following enhancements to the clients'  
 72 experiences:

73       Evaluation, enhancement, and promotion of Internet-delivered, computer-  
 74 mediated process that assists low-literate adults to qualify for and obtain entry-  
 75 level employment consistent with their individual interests and abilities. (*Logical*  
 76 *Framework Analysis*)

77       Each programming partner provided training opportunities for their facilitators,  
 78 who then provided clients with guided access to ESPORT and to evaluation processes.  
 79 The participating programs were in centres where occupational guidance or training  
 80 were regularly delivered to clients (these were called *local delivery agencies* [LDAs], in  
 81 project planning documents). The original project identified three programming  
 82 partners (from the *Proposal Template for Proponents [HRP 1.1.1]*):

- 83       1. **The Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council Of Canada**  
 84           **(AHRDCC).** Working through strategic public and private sector  
 85           partnerships, AHRDCC develops innovative employment solutions for  
 86           Aboriginal people, with a mission to promote full participation of Aboriginal  
 87           people in Canadian labour markets. Through partnerships with corporate,

educational, government, and aboriginal leaders, the Council pioneers ways to increase skills and training opportunities for Aboriginal people in Canada.

2. **The Cape Breton Education Consortium.** This is an umbrella group that represents employment service providers in the former industrial Cape Breton region. It is composed of the North Side Economic Development Assistance Corporation, the Glace Bay and Sidney YMCA, and the Horizon Achievement Centre. These organizations are funded through joint contracts with HRDC and the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services to provide employment counseling services and/or employment readiness services to individuals facing multiple barriers to employment.

3. **The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labor (NLFL).** This is the main umbrella organization for the labor movement in Newfoundland and Labrador, with a mandate to promote the interests of its affiliates, to generally advance the economic and social welfare of both unionized and non-unionized workers, and to advocate on behalf of workers and the general public areas such as economic development, social programs, equality, and human rights. The NLFL represents approximately 50,000 workers in 25 affiliated unions across the province, in a both the public and private sectors.

An amendment to the project, with costs jointly shared by CEP Consulting and the funding agency, was approved in late 2005, allowing recruitment of a coordinator for distance delivery in Newfoundland and Labrador. Implementation in these sites was to commence early in 2006, extending for six months (unless extended).

4. **ACCESS group, Surrey, BC.** Consists of facilitators and staff from the Aboriginal Connections to Employment (ACE); the ACCESS Centre; Klahow-eya Employment Services (KES); and the Native Education Centre (NEC). Programming commenced in the ACCESS group when training was conducted, July 26 – 28, 2005, at the Klahow-eya Centre, as described below.

117 All sites were re-trained onsite December 2, 5, and 6, 2005, due to turnover  
118 among staff.

119 5. **Ottawa John Howard Society.** This site commenced with training on  
120 November 9, 2005. Initial training was on ESPORT only. Another innovation  
121 in the training was to have students accompany facilitators, so that the  
122 training could be specific to the needs and preferences of individuals, and to  
123 assure that at least one student was active in the program when the facilitator  
124 returned to his or her home program.

125 6. **Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre, Calgary.** Training was  
126 conducted afternoons during the period January 16 and 17, 2006, for four  
127 staff facilitators. Trainee facilitators were invited to include clients in the  
128 training, but declined for various reasons (see below).

129 7. **Metis Employment Services, Region 3, Calgary.** This site was trained  
130 mornings during January 16 and 17, 2006. Like Aboriginal Futures, above,  
131 these facilitators, though offered the opportunity, declined to include their  
132 clients in the training process.

133 The Advisory Group. The ESPORT Advisory Group (AG) comprised  
134 representatives of the programming, planning, and funding agencies, sufficiently  
135 knowledgeable about and interested in the project to provide review of and guidance on  
136 project decisions and outcomes. These individuals advised and supported ESPORT  
137 during its development, and received the reports and briefings for reflection and  
138 comment. The core members of this group were ("Report to Advisors," 2004):

- 139 1. Brigid Hayes – Director, Labour, Canadian Labour and Business Centre,  
140 Ottawa.
- 141 2. Bonnie Kennedy – Executive Director, Canadian Association for Prior  
142 Learning Assessment, Ottawa.
- 143 3. Craig Hall – Director of Corporate Strategy, Aboriginal Human Resource  
144 Development Council of Canada (AHRDCC).

- 145 4. Annette Hutton - Program Analyst, Skills Information, Human Resources  
 146 Partnerships, Human Investment Programs, Human Resources Development  
 147 Skills Development Canada, Ottawa. (Ms. Hutton left HRSDC, and the  
 148 Advisory Group, in fall 2005.)

149 Other advisors who served on the Advisory Group included:

- 150 5. Patrick Cummins, project manager.  
 151 6. Trina Maher, Manager, Aboriginal Skills and Learning, AHRDCC, Ottawa  
 152 representing Craig Hall.  
 153 7. Colleen Meloche, HRSDC, Ottawa.  
 154 8. Suha Taissi, Policy Advisor, HRSDC, Ottawa.  
 155 9. Patrick J. Fahy, lead evaluator, and author of this report.

156 Originally, four meetings of the Advisory Group were planned: the first, in  
 157 Ottawa, November 9, 2004, was held prior to project implementation, and looked  
 158 particularly at the evaluation and communication plans. The second, during  
 159 implementation, considered emerging formative recommendations of the evaluation  
 160 (this meeting occurred December 12, 2005, in Ottawa). Others meetings were to be held  
 161 as required in relation to significant findings, emerging questions or opportunities, or at  
 162 the request of the Advisory Group itself.

163 The role of the Advisory Group was described as follows in the project's  
 164 Evaluation Plan:

165 The AG will be the initial source of guidance on the evaluation plan for this  
 166 project. As part of the face-to-face meeting with the Advisory Group, work will  
 167 begin on core elements of the *Evaluation Framework*, including development or  
 168 review of such evaluation components as the following:

- 169 1. Persons to be involved.  
 170 2. Schedule of key events.  
 171 3. Philosophy guiding the project and the evaluation (proposed is PAR).  
 172 4. Specific objectives of the project and the evaluation.  
 173 5. Observation and data-gathering processes, and data to be gathered.

6. Communication plan, methods, and schedule.

7. Reflection and (re)planning processes.

8. Reports to be produced; vetting and dissemination process.

At the meeting of the Advisory Group in November 2004, the above was endorsed by the AG.

## Evaluation process

### Background to the model – participatory action research (PAR)

The evaluation of the project was based upon principles of *participatory action research* (PAR), described as follows (“Evaluation proposal: ESPORT Demonstration Project, Draft 5,” 2004):

PAR is a method of research where creating a positive social change is the predominant driving force. PAR grew out of social and educational research and exists today as one of the few research methods which embraces principles of participation and reflection, and empowerment and emancipation of groups seeking to improve their social situation (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 1998).

In PAR evaluations, the focus is on production of results useful to the participants in making better decisions about possible action. *Meaningfulness* and *usefulness* are the crucial criteria for judging PAR results; participants must be able to understand and use evaluation findings. Through reflection and dialogue – the opportunity to think and talk about the results – everyone concerned should have the opportunity to understand what is being discovered, and to express their views about its implications. The purpose of the evaluation was to assure that the project’s lessons were understood in a collaborative fashion, and that the project benefited from its discoveries. An iterative process of *observation, reflection, planning, and action* was used to give all participants input into project development and implementation.

*Data collection – principles and strategies.* Various methods of collecting evaluation data were employed in the project, based on core PAR principles:

1. Anyone asked to participate in any evaluation activity could decline to participate, or could withdraw from any activity, at any time, without explanation, and without prejudice to their ongoing involvement.
2. Those wishing to remove themselves and/or their input from the study could do so at any time.
3. Any information collected during the evaluation process was kept completely confidential and secure at all times. No one who participated in the project was identified in any report or publication, unless they expressly agree or requested to be identified. Written permission was obtained from anyone for use of information which might identify them.
4. All information generated or data used during the evaluation was to be kept secure during the project, and destroyed at an agreed upon date after project end.

The principal data-gathering methods and strategies used in the evaluation included:

- **On-site or online interviews.** When feasible, the evaluators visited sites personally, to observe training events and to meet with and interview directly as many participants as possible. The evaluators also conducted interviews using various technologies (telephone, computer conferencing), or posted messages, surveys, or questions to participants electronically. The evaluators explained their intentions regarding any information generated by any of these methods.
- **Questionnaires, opinionnaires.** These surveys were administered in various forms, including face-to-face, oral or written, or electronic. Participants were asked to express their opinions, or describe their views or experiences, on these. Surveys were completed by an interviewer taking down the subject's comments, or by the subject directly. At least one open-ended question permitted respondents to comment on any aspect of the project.

- **Direct observations.** Anyone involved in the project used visits as opportunities to observe activities at learning centres. Observations of interest were forwarded to the evaluators.
- **Records (system-generated and paper-based).** Program records of client activity, and personal, work-related, and academic histories, were accessed as available. Confidentiality was maintained in any such secondary use of these data (Medical Research Council of Canada, 2003). Any reports that resulted preserved the confidentiality of participants; no one other than the evaluators saw information containing personal information.
- **Document analysis.** The evaluators used reports and other documents that added useful information to the evaluation. Before any documents were used, names and other identifying information were removed, and any identifying information retained in the reports was kept strictly confidential.

#### *Role of the evaluation consultants*

The evaluation consultants were involved in various of tasks during the project, including:

1. Helping to identify and contact those who should be included in the evaluation.
2. Explaining the evaluation to those involved or interested in the project.
3. Assisting participants to express their views and articulate their suggestions about various questions the project was attempting to address.
4. Helping participants to communicate with each other, and monitoring the overall interaction process.
5. Summarizing the results of discussions for participants, and asking them to clarify or comment on any questions arising from the ongoing discussions and planning.
6. Monitoring progress toward answering important project questions; writing reports to summarize results regarding the project's important questions.



7. Reporting the findings and conclusions reached by the project, and helping to make various identified stakeholders aware of the project's results.
8. Consulting with project administrators regarding evaluation results and their implications for project planning and direction.

The overall goal of the evaluation was to help the participants to achieve their various goals for the project. The PAR model regards all participants as "researchers," each playing a key role in the evaluation process, "including, but not limited to, [producing] information relevant to making decisions, judgments, comparisons, or goal attainment assessments" (Patton, 1975). All participants were asked to help make the evaluation successful (Masters, 1995). The evaluation consultants' role was described as supporting the participants, especially in communications, data gathering and analysis, recordkeeping and monitoring, and reporting (including dissemination of results).

#### Scope of the evaluation

The questions initially identified for the evaluation appear in the *First Interim Report* (pp. 15 – 17). These questions defined the scope of the evaluation, as follows:

1. Participants: backgrounds, characteristics, histories, goals and objectives, barriers, views of the program.
2. Programs: enrolment, programming, counseling, and employment histories; relation of history to the ESPORT project.
3. Technology: used, success/adaptations, impact on the program.
4. Outcomes: sustainability, adaptation to ESPORT, community and learning impacts.

#### Occasional Reports

In order to help the project management monitor adoption and progress of the project, *occasional reports* were provided from time to time based on emerging data or conditions observed as part of the evaluation process. As noted in the *First Interim Report*, six Occasional Reports were produced from February to June 2005. In the period

July 1, 2005, to November 1, 2005, five more Occasional Reports were provided to the project management.

Occasional reports were to brief project managers on situations or events considered significant for planning or the evaluation, clearly requiring intervention or attention, or meriting further exploration. The reports were quasi-confidential documents, intended for the use of management, rather than as project evaluation reports per se. Some of the observations or findings that were the subject of these reports might later have been included in other evaluation documents; if so, confidentiality was maintained regarding sources of the information reported.

#### Overall chronology of the project

Table 1 shows the major events of the evaluation process, during the period covered in this report (July 2005 – January 2006), in chronological order.

297 **Table 1: Chronology of major project events**

Date, location	Event
July 5, 2005	First ESPORT newsletter
July 7	Dates for ACCESS training set (July 27 – 29)
July 8	Occasional Report #7
July 27 – 29	Training, ACCESS program, Vancouver
August 12	<i>Occasional Report #8</i>
August 31	<i>Occasional Report #9</i>
September 19	<i>Occasional Report #10</i>
October 4	<i>Occasional Report #11</i>
October 7	Amendment to demonstration project agreement signed by Minister.
October 20	<i>Occasional Report #12</i>
October 24	Spell-checker added to portfolio builder
October 26	Note from PC to Clahane, Bishop, re problems in Sydney accessing PLATO materials; request for meeting
October 31	Planning for John Howard Society, Ottawa, training and evaluation.
November 9	Training, John Howard Society, Hire Power group, Ottawa
November 15	Question from Cape Breton (C. MacLellan) re suspension of Canadian PLATO operations; referred to P. Cummins.
November 16	<i>Readiness questionnaire</i> sent to Hire Power group, John Howard Society, Ottawa
November 16	Training, John Howard Society, literacy group, Ottawa.
November 17	ESPORT announces (Newsletter) that PLATO (Canada) has closed its offices
November 22	<i>Readiness questionnaire</i> sent to literacy group, John Howard Society, Ottawa
November 27	Occasional Report #13; <i>Facilitator and Client Surveys</i> sent by e-mail (Attachments 5 – 7)
November 28	TEC authorized to upgrade RAM at CEP expense
December 2, 5, 6	Retraining of ACCESS facilitators, Vancouver, due to staff turnover
December 6	Meeting, London, WIL program
December 7	Cut-off for <i>Facilitator and Client Surveys</i> Meeting, Vancouver, with SUCCESS programs
December 12	Advisory committee meeting, Ottawa
January 16-17, 2006	Training, evaluator site visit, Calgary: Metis Employment Services, Region 3, and Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre sites
January 18 – 27	Survey, student completion problem
January 30	<i>Occasional Report #14</i> – follow-up on new Calgary sites
February 2	<i>Draft Interim Report #2</i> submitted
February 27	<i>Interim Report #2</i> released

## 299 **Project evolution**

### 300 Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert

301 This initiative, which was not part of the core project, commenced in early 2005.  
 302 The major findings of the implementation were reported by the project coordinator and  
 303 on-site instructor-facilitator. Salient findings from this implementation are presented  
 304 below.

### 305 John Howard Society, Ottawa

306 In summer 2005, the opportunity to offer ESPOUT to clients of this agency arose.  
 307 Two programs, one for literacy clients and another career preparation ("Hire Power")  
 308 were involved. As with the Saskatchewan Penitentiary site, these clients and programs  
 309 were deemed comparable to those in the project, so relevant findings will be included  
 310 here and in future reports.

### 311 Virtual community initiative

312 After the April 27, 2005, meeting, in Ottawa, at which the virtual community  
 313 (VC) initiative commenced, Mark Wallace continued to coordinate the program.

314 Five objectives were set for participants who join the VC:

- 315 1. Greater understanding of the whole project, not just one's own role.
- 316 2. Less need to use [the project manager] as chief conduit for information, when  
 317 it may be more efficient to communicate directly with team members.
- 318 3. More opportunities for synergy through increased project awareness and  
 319 increased interpersonal contact.
- 320 4. Chance to work towards the development of a corporate identity/vision.
- 321 5. By encouraging the options and feedback of all ESPOUT members, a greater  
 322 sense of ownership and pride in the project and its products.

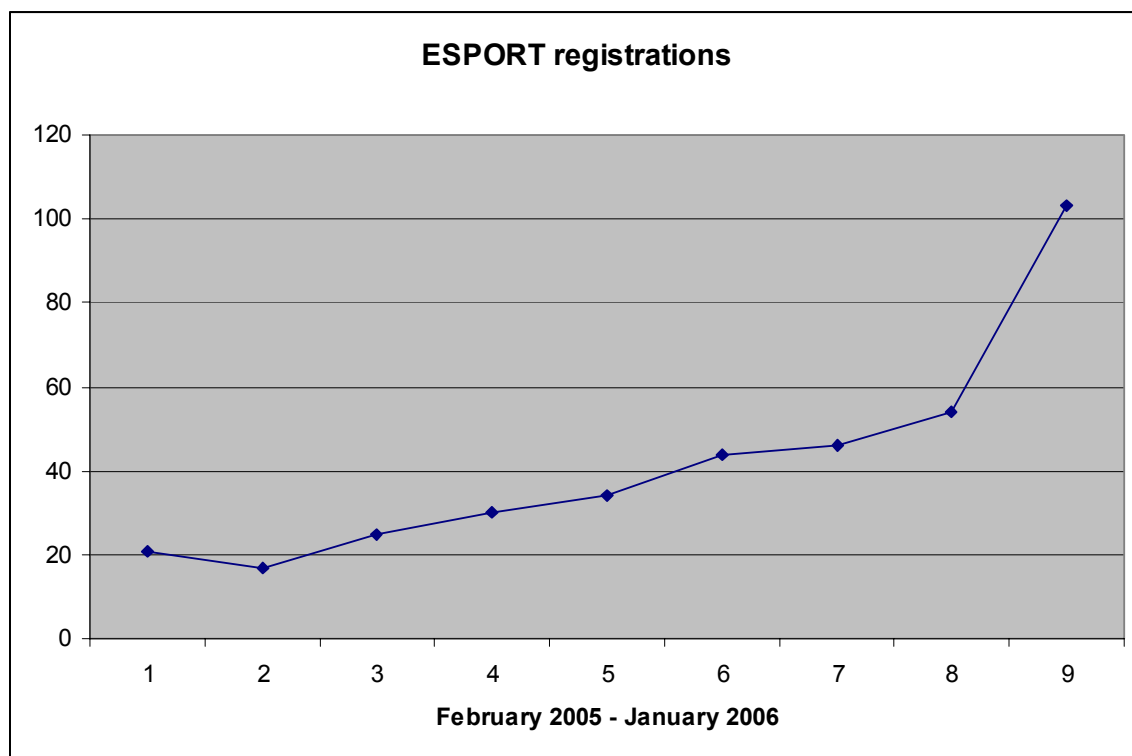
323

## Project outcomes – July 2005 to January 2006

As noted, the *First Interim Report* contains information about results of the project to June 30, 2005. The following describes outcomes in the period July 2005 to January 2006.

### Client commencements and activity

Client commencement in the ESPORT program, and completion of ESPORT elements, grew steadily as the project matured. Figure 1 shows the growth in the number of clients participating the demonstration project who commenced ESPORT from February 2005 to January 2006:



**Figure 1: Growth in “total learners” (clients) over twelve months (February 2005 to January 2006).**

Table 2 shows the geographic distribution of demonstration project clients across Canada, as of January 20, 2006.

**Table 2: Total clients by province, to January 20, 2006**

Province	Clients	%
Alberta	8	8%
British Columbia	29	28
Nova Scotia	38	37
Ontario	28	27
Total	103	100%

The number of demonstration project sites, by province, is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Total project sites, by province (January 20, 2006)**

Province	Sites	%
Alberta	2	17%
British Columbia	3	25
Nova Scotia	6	50
Ontario	1	8
Total	12	100%

Overall growth was accompanied by activity in all elements of the ESPORT program. Table 4 shows changes in the ESPORT activities in which clients were engaged, over the twelve-month period from project commencement (February 2005) to January 20, 2006.

**Table 4: Client completion of ESPORT elements, February 28, 2005, to January 20, 2006**

Activity	2/28/05	3/10	3/22	5/17	6/21	8/30	9/19	11/25	1/20/06
InterOptions	3	3	3	17	19	31	34	55	78
Self-Assessment	2	2	2	8	12	16	19	31	40
Portfolio	2	2	2	6	6	6	12	26	54
Learning Plan(s)	1	1	1	1	2	6	6	8	9
Total learners	21	17	25	30	34	44	46	74	103

Facilitators were trained (and re-trained) regularly as part of the demonstration project. Table 5 shows the number of trained ESPORT facilitators in place in participating provinces as of January 20, 2006.

358 **Table 5: Total project facilitators trained, by geographic location, to January 20, 2006**

Province	Facilitators	%
Alberta	5	10%
British Columbia	18	35
Nova Scotia	15	29
Ontario	13	26
Total	51	100%

359

360 Finally, Table 6 shows ESPORT activity levels for all sites and all presently  
 361 trained facilitators, as of January 27, 2006. (Note that all facilitators are not presently  
 362 active; the re-training reflected in the totals shown in Table 5 was often required by  
 363 facilitator turn-over at these sites.)

364

365 **Table 6: Client numbers, other sites, by facilitator, as of January 27, 2005**

Site / Facilitator	Completed InterOptions	Self- Assessment	Learning plan	Portfolio	Totals
<b>ACCESS</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>
- Anne	1	0	0	1	1
- Blair	1	1	1	1	1
- Brandon	4	0	0	1	4
- Candy	2	0	0	2	3
- Cori	1	0	0	0	2
- Donna	1	0	0	1	1
- Fred	1	0	0	1	1
- Jackie	0	0	0	0	1
- Jolene	1	1	0	2	2
- Lorna	1	0	1	1	3
- Pam	1	0	0	0	1
- Shannon McC	2	2	1	1	2
- Shannon McM	1	1	0	1	2
- Tonya	6	5	1	5	6
<b>Cape – TEC</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>
- Charlie	4	0	0	4	6
- Gina	0	0	0	0	1
- Derek	2	0	0	0	2
- Jenny	12	9	1	9	12
- Lee	1	0	0	1	1
- Marie	5	5	1	5	5
- Michelle	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Cape – GB-YMCA</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
- Sadie	2	2	2	2	2
<b>JHS – Hire Power</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31</b>
- Deborah	2	1	0	1	2
- Abdul	3	0	0	2	4
- Jamie	2	0	0	0	2
- Justin	2	1	0	1	2
- Ken	4	3	0	1	13
- Lydia	2	0	0	2	2
- Melanie	1	1	0	1	1
- Neally	2	2	0	1	2
- Rhea	2	2	1	1	3
<b>Metis Employment</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
- Tessie	1	0	0	1	1
- Caroline	2	1	0	2	3
<b>Aboriginal Futures</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
- Jami	1	1	0	2	2
- Shay	1	1	2	1	2
- Jack	1	1	0	1	1
<b>Project totals</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>113</b>



366

367 Use of ESPORT elements: Indicators of career interests

368 As clients worked with ESPORT, their portfolios, and the investigations they  
 369 undertook in producing the portfolios, showed the careers of most interest to them.  
 370 Table 7 shows the titles of the careers which were most often accessed by clients. (Note  
 371 that these data reflect *all* users of ESPORT during this time period, not only those in the  
 372 demonstration project.)

373

374 **Table 7: Frequency of careers included in all clients' portfolios (as of January 20, 2006)**

Career	#	%
Small Business Owner-Operators	9	7%
Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers	7	5
Administrative Clerks	6	4
Heritage Interpreters	6	4
Computer Operators	4	3
Nurse Aides, Orderlies, and Patient Service Associates	4	3
Other Protective Service Occupations	4	3
Accounting and Related Clerks	3	2
Apparel Production Supervisors	3	2
Boat Operators	3	2
By-law Enforcement and Other Regulatory Officers	3	2
Court Clerks	3	2
Heavy Equipment Operators (Except Crane)	3	2
Image, Social and Other Personal Consultants	3	2
Oil and Gas Well Drilling Workers and Services Operators	3	2
Quality Control Technicians	3	2
Sales Representatives, Wholesale Trade (Non-Technical)	3	2
Sign Pre-production Technicians	3	2
Special Events Co-ordinators and Special Events Managers	3	2

375

376 Another measure of career interest was the learning plans produced by clients.

377 Table 8 shows the careers most often found in clients' the learning plans.

378

**Table 8: Careers most often included in clients' *learning plans* (as of January 20, 2006)**

Career	#	%	Views
Library Clerks	9	24%	9
Construction Trades Helpers and Labourers	6	16	10
Small Business Owner-Operators	5	13	15
Nursery and Greenhouse Workers	4	11	8
Special Events Co-ordinators and Special Events Managers	4	11	6
Nurse Aides, Orderlies, and Patient Service Associates	3	8	26
By-law Enforcement and Other Regulatory Officers	2	5	11
Computer Operators	2	5	9

Judging the basis for (and thus the potential soundness or plausibility of) clients' career interests and choices requires information on the processes involved in making these choices, especially how often clients examined the career information available in ESPORT. In Table 8, above, the column marked "views" indicates the number of page views of specific careers examined by clients, since these data began being tracked (December 2005).

Interpreting the above data is easier with the following, showing those careers in ESPORT that, overall, were viewed most often over this same period. The total number of views in the period of interest here (December 27, 2005, to January 20, 2006) was 1968. The two careers from Table 8 that were among the most commonly accessed overall are shown in bold in Table 9.

**Table 9: Most commonly viewed careers (as of January 20, 2006)**

Career	#	%
Accounting and Related Clerks	277	14.1%
Heritage Interpreters	30	1.5
Human Resources Managers	27	1.4
<b>Nurse Aides, Orderlies, and Patient Service Associates</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1.3</b>
Small Business Counselors	20	1.0
Elementary and Secondary School Teacher Assistants	19	1.0
<b>Small Business Owner-Operators</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Early Childhood Educator Assistants	15	0.8

Finally, the terms used by clients in their free searches of the career database also provide insight into the employment areas attractive to clients. Table 10 shows the terms most often typed into the search utility by clients to find career information, during the period December 27, 2005, to January 20, 2006.

**Table 10: Most commonly used client-generated search terms, December 2005 to January 2006**

Client-generated career search term	#
Construction	40
Retail	24
Health, Health service	20
Fish	16
Food	14
Sales	9
Travel	7
Call	7
Design	7

The above data suggests some observations about how clients used ESPORT to generated information about possible careers, and the careers they were interested in pursuing:

- ESPORT activity levels increased steadily over the 12-month term observed, especially since November 2005. In the period September 2005 to January 2006, activity levels increased 224% (Figure 1; Tables 4 and 6).
- Clients in the demonstration project were generally evenly distributed geographically (Table 2).
- Over fifty facilitators were trained during this period (Table 5). While not all of them continue to be active in the project (indeed, part of the reason for re-training, and for this high number of trainees, was turn-over among facilitators), nevertheless, this number suggests that the objective of cultivating a *community of practice* is realistic.

- Clients showed interest in a wide range of careers (Tables 7 to 10). The viability and feasibility of these, in terms of their personal qualifications and actual employment opportunities, remain to be investigated.
- Careers that showed special appeal for ESPORT clients overall included construction, retail, health, fishing, and food services.

#### Client and Facilitator surveys

In order to assess attitudes toward ESPORT, and experiences of clients and facilitators, a survey was sent out by e-mail on November 27, 2005 (Attachment 5). The surveys were intended to answer the following questions:

##### Client survey:

1. What is the client's overall impression of ESPORT?
2. Specifically, what ESPORT elements are viewed as helpful?
3. What are the clients' goals related to ESPORT and other services and resources?
4. Other comments.

##### Facilitator survey:

1. What problems or successes have emerged with ESPORT for clients, from view of facilitators?
2. What requests do facilitators have for further information, assistance, or resources for themselves?

The surveys were sent with a cover letter that asked for assistance from the local facilitator in completing the survey, and asking clients to complete theirs. A total of 13 surveys were returned from the three sites, as shown in Table 11:

**Table 11: Survey returns**

Site	Clients	Facilitators	Total
ACCESS – Vancouver	2	2	4
JHS – Ottawa	1	2	3
Cape Breton	0	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>

Results of the survey were as follows (see Attachments 8 and 9, and bear in mind the small number of participants overall, especially the clients):

- Both clients and facilitators rated their experiences positively (the mean rating for clients was 3.32, for facilitators 3.12, where 4 = *strongly agree*, 1 = *strongly disagree*).
- The two groups generally agreed with each other in their ratings: the Spearman  $\rho$  (*rho*) correlation was .35, an indication of a “moderate” level of correlation.
- On five items, clients and facilitators differed by 5 rankings or more (see Attachment 8), even though *both groups were positive* (i.e., mean values greater than 2.5, indicating results skewed to the *agree-strongly agree* end of the Likert scale). Though both were positive, facilitators were more likely than clients to believe that:
  - Clients would use their ESPORT *portfolio* when looking for a job (item 15).
  - Clients knew their potential occupational skills better after using ESPORT (item 14).
  - Clients found the *portfolio builder* useful.
- Clients were more likely than facilitators to believe that:
  - They would like to use ESPORT more (item 5).
  - They found the *self-assessment tool* useful (item 9).

While there was a difference in ranking, it is important to emphasize that *both groups were positive* about the above elements, as shown in Attachment 9: clients agreed that the *self-assessment tool* was useful (Likert value = 3.0, where 3 meant *agree*); facilitators rated this item (item 9) 3.14. The ratings for more use of ESPORT (item 5) were 3.0 and 3.3, respectively, for clients and facilitators.

The overall conclusion from this brief survey was that both clients and facilitators saw the value in ESPORT in relation to their career development, and tended to see most aspects of ESPORT use in the same light.

Though not a formal part of the project, the Sask Pen experience illustrates results achievable when facilitators are committed and clients spend the time required to complete the program. According to a letter received from the Sask Pen facilitator, of 42 referrals received since September 2005, 26 had been processed, 4 had been unable or unwilling to participate, six had completed, and six more were still working on the program. The facilitator reported that she had provided information sessions to the inmate, and that self-referrals had resulted (Attachment 3).

#### ESPORT completion rates

Early in the project, it was apparent that many clients were commencing but not completing ESPORT. The reasons for this became a focus of this phase of the evaluation, and investigations of this phenomenon will continue in the final phase of the project.

To examine the phenomenon of non-completion, a question was put to local coordinators in the sites with sufficient ESPORT history to have an opinion (Attachment 4). The question that was put to each participant was:

*We're seeing, at pretty well all of our sites, that a certain number of clients are getting started - creating an account and getting through the early stages like the interest inventory - but they aren't "finishing" the process and walking out with a training plan. So what I'd like to hear from you is why you think this might be happening....*

Two individuals with positions of authority and perspective in multi-site programs responded. The reasons given by them for non-completion included:

- Program is still attempting to identify appropriate clients for ESPORT.
- Present clients, of various ages and backgrounds, find ESPORT interesting, but are not motivated to address skills deficits systematically with a Learning Plan.

- 494       • Many of current users are not at entry levels; therefore, do not see ESPORT as
- 495       offering relevant employment assistance.
- 496       • Technical problems in some sites have discouraged use.
- 497       • Turn-over has required re-training of facilitators; re-training was also useful
- 498       to address “rusty” ESPORT skills among previously trained facilitators.
- 499       • Re-training that was completed [in fall 2005] was helpful, and resulted in
- 500       more use of ESPORT.
- 501       • When they become busy, facilitators tend to resort to traditional methods of
- 502       handling clients (use of ESPORT declines).
- 503       • Attempts to use PLATO with ESPORT have regularly encountered technical
- 504       problems that constituted “a nuisance.”

505       A facilitator, experienced with ESPORT but without administrative  
 506       responsibilities added the following comments:

- 507       • Facilitators need to learn enough about ESPORT to be able to describe its
- 508       components and its potential usefulness accurately to clients. Immediately
- 509       after initial training, facilitators may not have a good enough grasp of
- 510       ESPORT to do this well. Follow-up training, and the use of the virtual
- 511       community, could provide information and additional confidence to
- 512       facilitators for this task.
- 513       • Clients who are involved in extended upgrading or skill-training programs
- 514       might find it easier to access ESPORT in stages. Some ESPORT activities are
- 515       useful early in a counseling and upgrading program, while others are more
- 516       relevant after some other experiences have been successfully completed. At
- 517       all stages, concrete results of activities (printed copies, an evolving file of
- 518       findings or discoveries) should be compiled and made freely available to the
- 519       client.
- 520       • While the decision about what to present, and when, should be made on the
- 521       basis of individual client needs, characteristics, and preferences, but
- 522       facilitators should entertain the possibility of pacing clients through ESPORT

523 along with, and in relation to, any other activities in which they might be  
524 engaged.

525 Evidence from Sask Pen indicated that average time for completion of the  
526 ESPORT among the inmates involved was 3 to 4.5 hours, and that the record time for  
527 completion was 1.5 hours. Another observation of interest from this site was that  
528 preparation and previous education was a factor; the facilitator wrote, "I have found  
529 that the more computer literate and high functioning the offender is, the shorter the time  
530 it takes to complete ESPORT."

531 While completion rates will be a priority of the evaluation during the rest of the  
532 project, and completion levels will be monitored and updated in the final report, it  
533 should be recognized that non-completion may be viewed as complex, representing  
534 various realities, and not simply a sign of a failure of the program. It is well known that  
535 most adult learners, even if low-functioning, prefer learning situations that allow them  
536 to exercise some choice and self-direction, and are motivated by their (real-world)  
537 priorities and goals (Kidd, 1973; Knowles, 1978, 1981), and tend to look for immediate  
538 applications of new learning. It may be that some non-completers have gained enough  
539 from the program without finishing it, that other priorities have emerged or become  
540 pressing, or that new opportunities have presented themselves. (Non-completion is not  
541 *de facto* evidence of failure of either the program or the client.)

542 The experiences of clients, completers and, as possible, non-completers, will be  
543 examined to attempt to address this question.

#### 544 **Status – project and non-project elements**

##### 545 Cape Breton status report

546 Since the initial training workshop (January 18 – 21, 2005), activity in Cape  
547 Breton has been low, except for the Entrepreneurial Centre (TEC; see Table 6). Several  
548 Occasional Reports have chronicled activity levels, but it was report #12 (October 20,  
549 2005) that resulted in the identification of several factors that have suppressed usage of



550 ESPOINT in these sites. Specifically, the following were cited as problems in the Cape  
551 Breton:

- 552       ▪ The interface between ESPOINT and PLATO was deemed not friendly  
553           enough, especially for facilitators who had not used the system immediately  
554           after training. (Some of the reported “technical problems” were, it was  
555           suspected, actually instances of staff being unable to remember how to use  
556           the system, due to a lack of practice after training.)
- 557       ▪ CHOICES, a career counseling tool familiar to facilitators in these sites, was  
558           deemed more attractive by some, because it was seen as simpler, was already  
559           in place, and was familiar to facilitators and administrators.
- 560       ▪ ESPOINT and PLATO use were initially tied to one another; use of one  
561           entailed use of the other, with ESPOINT preceding PLATO. (PLATO was  
562           used in the *training plan* phase of the portfolio development process, to  
563           address academic skills deficiencies detected in the *self-assessment*.) The Cape  
564           Breton informant (from TEC; i.e., the largest ESPOINT user site in the Cape)  
565           suggested that clients be permitted to use PLATO first, if they or their  
566           counselor chose, in order to gain trust and understanding of and enthusiasm  
567           for the system. At that point, ESPOINT could be introduced.
- 568       ▪ A time-lag between enrolment and appearance of accessible lessons was  
569           reported. This lag prevented clients from entering and using the ESPOINT  
570           system immediately after registration. Facilitators were not advised of the  
571           reason for the lag, and were not able to advise clients of how long they would  
572           have to wait before accessing the system, with consequent negative impact  
573           on motivation.
- 574       ▪ Some technical issues continue to exist for some sites in this region. While  
575           many of the issues have been addressed, some facilitators have formed a  
576           negative impression of ESPOINT from earlier experiences, which the regional  
577           spokesman believes are hampering further use. Project management is

aware of this, and is considering whether the situation is remediable in the time remaining for the project.

- Immediately after training, HRSDC in the Cape notified programs under its jurisdiction that they were not authorized to be involved in the project. This instance of poor articulation between the local and national offices had profound implications for the initial implementation of ESPORT in this area.

Despite these difficulties, one Cape Breton site (TEC) continued to make regular use of the system, both ESPORT and PLATO, and continued to supply feedback and suggestions for improvement to procedures and technologies. This site was also creative in applying the system to other client groups (such as students of the local high school, enrolled in the Physical Active Living (PAL) program).

#### ACCESS sites, Vancouver

Three sites were trained July 27 – 29, 2005, as part of the ACCESS initiative. The three sites were Aboriginal Connections to Employment (ACE); Kla-how-eya Employment Services (KES); and the Native Education Centre (NEC). A total of eleven facilitators and administrators were eligible for training; six actually took the full three days of training, and all participated in the follow-up readiness survey.

The readiness survey was conducted within a week of completion of the training (*Occasional Report #9*; see Table 13, Attachment 5). In their remarks, three of the six facilitators who responded mentioned that time pressure had reduced their immediate use of ESPORT. Two other respondents made recommendations about the system: one mentioned that the language/reading levels of some parts of the program could prove challenging to some clients; another suggested that program administrators should “provide a push so that we can get started soon after training, so we don't lose our knowledge”; and the third wondered whether clients would be able to separate specific occupations used as examples in ESPORT, from their own actual career interests and expectations. (This last point refers to the fact that ESPORT uses examples, such as babysitting, which many clients have experience with, to illustrate potential job skills

arising from previous work experience. ESPORT explains that “A babysitter interacts with several people at once and takes into account their individual needs...,” to cue the client to the skill contained in this experience. One facilitator voiced her concern: “In their mind, they may think, ‘I don’t want to be a babysitter.’ Although it may sound silly, this is really how some of our clients may take it.”)

As of this report, usage of ESPORT at these sites is as shown in Table 6.

### *Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert*

The Saskatchewan Penitentiary (Sask Pen) was not an official part of the ESPORT demonstration project, but was undertaken when interest was shown by Corrections Canada, and qualified clients and facilitators were identified at the penitentiary site. Costs of this implementation are shared between Corrections Canada and CEP Consulting, Inc. (Sask Pen uses only ESPORT, not PLATO, due to the priority of making the implementation easier to establish and support, and in the interest of simplifying training.)

Initially, this implementation experienced several problems:

- None of those initially training ultimately took part in the implementation.
- Technical problems arose in the initial local area network (LAN) implementation.
- Hardware problems required the building and installation of a second server.
- Regional Corrections Canada technical staff had to be oriented to support requirements of ESPORT.
- There was some initial adjustments to ESPORT, as an innovation, on the part of facilitators and Sask Pen senior officials.

Once problems were resolved, the experience at the Saskatchewan Penitentiary became very positive, and the site continues to provide useful feedback on ESPORT as a tool for helping clients reflect on and understand the character of their work experiences. Attachments 1 and 3 contain descriptions from earlier in the

implementation of client outcomes using ESPORT. The major points reported by users in the corrections setting include:

- Clients require guidance, some throughout the process, with ESPORT.
- Clients frequently discount or fail to appreciate the occupational significance of their previous employment and life experiences.
- The counselor working with a client using ESPORT requires patience; a non-threatening environment of trust enhances ESPORT's positive effects.
- The ESPORT resume is quite acceptable to industry; however, a client lacking expected credentials, especially a high school diploma, would be less likely to get an interview, even with a positive resume.
- Client experience and familiarity with the computer is important.
- Information generated by ESPORT aids the counseling process. The resume is very helpful in clarifying assumptions and detailing the client's employment and skill-training history.
- With ESPORT, goal setting is more realistic, and skills (and skills deficits) are clearer and better linked related to occupational goals.

In early 2006, a updated report of usage at Sask Pen was received from the on-site facilitator. According to this report, 42 referrals had been received for ESPORT since September 2005, of which 30 had been processed. Results were noted in the "Project Outcomes" section, above. Overall, Sask Pen rates their experience with ESPORT as "very positive." ESPORT continues to be tested at Sask Pen, and as results are pertinent to this evaluation, they will continue to be reported.

#### John Howard Society, Ottawa

This site, like the Saskatchewan Penitentiary, Prince Albert, is not an official part of the ESPORT demonstration project. (Costs, which have been minimal, are borne by CEP Consulting.) The project commenced with two training groups, the employment-focused group (Hire Power; trained November 9) and the literacy group (training November 16). The Hire Power group consisted of nine persons, including 2 clients, and

661 a student intern; the literacy group also consisted of nine, including 4 facilitators and 5  
662 clients.

663 As noted earlier, an innovation in training for this group was the presence of  
664 clients (students) in the training sessions, accompanying their facilitators (instructors).  
665 The clients and facilitators proceed through the training together, and problem solve as  
666 necessary together as part of the process. PLATO was not introduced with ESPORT at  
667 this site, to permit greater focus in the training; PLATO will be introduced later, if  
668 appropriate and feasible.

669 As part of the training, this group was asked to describe their goals for the  
670 training session, and for ESPORT. Responses included the following:

671 Facilitator: I would like to become more familiar with the program itself and  
672 the administration of it so I can use the results to help my clients  
673 progress to meet both short-term and long-term goals.

674  
675 Administrator: to familiarize myself with ESPORT and how best to administer  
676 and facilitate the program.

677  
678 Facilitator/site administrator: gain more knowledge about ESPORT. Be familiar  
679 enough with the program to answer clients' questions and  
680 provide guidance and support on ESPORT.

681  
682 Facilitator: to learn about a new assessment tool for clients that provides easy  
683 to understand, useful information to help clients to make  
684 education/training/career decisions.

685  
686 Facilitator, administrator: 1) like to see how this tool can be used in group  
687 settings; 2) is it workshop friendly?; 3) how can we expand its use  
688 -- can we use it for computer training, self-esteem building?

689  
690 Client: I hope to learn today about new job-search strategies and possible  
691 career change advice.

692  
693 Facilitator: As a social service worker ... I wanted to gain as much knowledge  
694 as possible on this field placement. I think attending this program  
695 will allow me to be as updated as possible as I enter into the work  
696 world in this career.

697

698 Client: I would like to find out what different skills I actually have and  
 699 different job search engines.  
 700

701 This question had not been asked of previous trainees, so comparisons are not  
 702 possible, but the tenor of the comments indicated a positive view of ESPORT, and a clear  
 703 conception of its purposes.

704 Other comments of this group included the following (received at various points  
 705 in the training, in response to invitations to comment on the training, or to make  
 706 suggestions about ESPORT):

707 Facilitator: I had already bought in because I had worked with it before  
 708 today. Now I want to get one or two counselors on board (at  
 709 another John Howard Society). They will like the Authentic  
 710 Materials. People have their favourites, but one-stop shopping  
 711 means this is the best. Other systems are all based on interest. This  
 712 has everything in place. You don't have to go to other sites. Great  
 713 time saver. Information is at your fingertips.  
 714

715 Site administrator: Getting people started is challenging. Introducing people to  
 716 the first steps. Doing the training in a group is distracting.  
 717

718 Client: Great. One-stop shopping. Gender friendly, age friendly. Gives  
 719 great suggestions that you wouldn't think of. Resume gives ideas.  
 720

721 Facilitator: Liked the way everything was connected. Break into occupation,  
 722 then showed tasks. Didn't have to go to NOC. You have a "cheat  
 723 sheet" for when you go to the interview. Liked the way each job  
 724 gets its own portfolio.  
 725

726 Facilitator, program manager: Love the learning – adult learning. Learning by  
 727 doing. Fun to see others see the possibilities. Young people will  
 728 come.  
 729

730 Facilitator: [Client's] reaction was positive. Interest Inventory made sense.  
 731 The innovative part is like... gave examples, make connections.  
 732

733 Client: A lot easier for me to compare life experience. It's right there in  
 734 front of me. A lot easier because of this.  
 735

The literacy group, as would be expected, had specific comments about the reading and literacy demands of the system. The goals and objectives included the following (the comment indicated was from a client):

- To learn how to use ESPORT in order to help clients achieve the best benefits for finding a job, etc.
- To understand how ESPORT will enhance the organizational and work-related skills of clients. How can clients use ESPORT to their advantage?
  - Client: To learn how the program will teach me how to work the skills to find a job.
- To see how ESPORT works and how it is better than other ways of finding a career.
- To learn how to use ESPORT will be able to benefit clients and aid them in searching for a career with the skills they may already have or be currently learning.

Their comments, taken after their training, included the following suggestions about the training and about ESPORT.

**Suggestions for improvement of ESPORT:**

- Too wordy – watch level of comprehension.
- Bullet points. Fewer words.
- Need a file for everybody.
- Make the button for Print Format more obvious.
- Too much reading.
- Tasks (in assessment) are okay, but they should be mixed up as to difficulty.
- Reading about tasks – How can I know if I can do that job if I’ve never tried to do it? (Need to interpret the skills for the job. Generalize.)
- I tried to project myself into that job.
- Break in the middle.
- Maybe a two-hour initial training session is too long for some clients.

- Make sure clients each has an email address before the session.
- The information needs to be condensed. You must say the most with the fewest number of words, or else the clients will not bother to complete the questionnaires.

**Comments on logistics of training:**

- How to deal with two people sitting around one computer.
- Make sure printer is connected and running.
- Want paper copies. (Clients can highlight useful things.)
- Don't want this to be lost.

**General Comments:**

- More jobs that I didn't know I was interested in, that I am interested in now.
- Choose opportunities. Hopefully, I will look more.
- First part gives us a direction to work on.
- [Client] Takes too long.

The trainer noted that the Literacy Coordinator made up files of each client's work, which could be useful in other parts of their programs (i.e., for portfolio assessment by counselors). Also, by the end of the training consensus developed that three 1.5 hour sessions may be better than two 2-hour sessions, as clients began to get restless towards the end. Finally, it was concluded that having clients attend the training with their counselor/facilitators was a help to both, and made the training more effective.

Within a week of completion of the training, a readiness survey was conducted with the John Howard participants. The results are shown in Table 11, Attachment 5.

The table and the attachment show that the Ottawa John Howard trainees differed from the other two previous training sites in various ways.

The Ottawa John Howard trainees were more confident about:

- Explaining ESPORT to clients (1).
- Showing ESPORT to clients (2).



794 The Ottawa John Howard trainees were less confident about:  
 795 • Recognizing outcomes or findings important to the evaluation (8).  
 796 • Contacting the project's evaluators (11).

797 The Cape Breton trainees were more confident about:  
 798 • Explaining the evaluation model (PAR) to clients (5).

799 The ACCESS (Vancouver) trainees were more confident about:  
 800 • Contacting the project administrator when necessary (9).

801 Some of the above results were unsurprising: the Cape Breton group had an  
 802 extensive (too extensive, it was later concluded; this aspect of the orientation was  
 803 dramatically shortened in subsequent training) orientation to the purpose and processes  
 804 of the evaluation); JHS trainees had only a minimal introduction to the evaluation, and  
 805 had not met the evaluators in person, at the time of the survey. The finding that JHS  
 806 trainees also felt more confident explaining and showing ESPORT to clients was  
 807 gratifying, as this was exactly the purpose in removing some other content from the  
 808 initial training, as described above. These results suggest that the objective of refining  
 809 the focus of the initial orientation was achieved in the Ottawa training.

#### 810 Aboriginal Futures and Metis Employment Societies, Alberta

811 In January 2006, these two Calgary-based organizations were trained and  
 812 commenced ESPORT operations, *Aboriginal Futures Career and Training Centre*, and *Metis*  
 813 *Employment Services*. As of this writing, the programs have only begun use of ESPORT.  
 814 Information about their results will be provided in the final report.

815 The following points, raised with the evaluator and the project manager (who  
 816 were present) immediately after training had been completed, were recorded:

#### 817 Cautions and questioning comments

- 818 1. The time commitment appears significant.
- 819 2. Some materials would be more useful if they could be printed out; some of  
 820 these, it was noted, can be printed, and further instruction was promised to  
 821 train users how to do this.

3. The training had presented a large amount of information, which would need to be absorbed and digested by staff before they would feel truly comfortable with the ESPORT system.
4. Clients would need quiet and privacy to work through all the elements of the program conscientiously; this might be challenging, especially at busy times of the day.
5. There were some typos in the materials.
6. The ESPORT print diagram in the training materials no longer matches the diagram of activity on the ESPORT screen.
7. Clients will still need the assistance of the facilitator to polish their resumes, prepare for interviews.
8. Lack of suitable hardware may limit use; hardware has been ordered but has not yet arrived; existing hardware is heavily used, and is not available for the sole use of clients in this project.
9. Facilitators must help clients when none of the jobs generated by ESPORT match clients' expectations or interests.

#### Positive comments

1. The format of the resumes made them stand out well, would probably positively distinguish ESPORT users from other applicants.
2. Experience of completing the self-assessment demonstrates to clients that they have skills and relevant experience for future employment; often, this is a surprise to them, and is encouraging.
3. The process is a systematic career planning tool, with good potential to help clients identify their skills, and to help facilitators provide effective advice.
4. The ESPORT materials appear to parallel the Alberta ALIS (Alberta Learning Information Service; <http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/main.asp>) materials already in use in the centres.

- 849 5. Process seems positive: clients do not need another negative experience, or  
 850 more proof of their deficiencies; ESPORT appears to emphasize and  
 851 demonstrate the positive.
- 852 6. While other tools and packages exist that do many of the things that ESPORT  
 853 does, ESPORT is a package, is accessible over the Web, and is integrated, to  
 854 help clients work on their own, and over time, when facilitators are not  
 855 present.
- 856 7. Working with ESPORT output, facilitators can help clients see the application  
 857 of their previous work histories to their future possibilities; should also make  
 858 counseling further education or training easier.
- 859 8. ESPORT appears more friendly and useful for low-level clients than  
 860 CHOICES, or some of the other materials currently in use. (ESPORT should  
 861 allow counselors to advise clients they formerly referred elsewhere, due to  
 862 lack of suitable materials.)
- 863 9. As familiarity increases, potential usefulness also increases; further  
 864 experience with ESPORT will be needed to truly test it.
- 865 The progress of these two sites will be reported in the final report. They will be  
 866 asked to complete the Readiness Survey, as the other sites have done.

## 867 **Project initiatives**

### 868 Virtual community

869 Background. In April 2005, WERC (Mark Wallace) conducted preliminary  
 870 research on Communities of Practice. Mark organized a meeting of ESPORT team  
 871 members in Ottawa, some of whom had been working together for years, but had never  
 872 met in person.

873 The primary initial objective of the meeting was to develop a Community of  
 874 Practice for ESPORT team members, to improve communication about the project, and  
 875 to bypass the need for using Patrick Cummins as the conduit of all work-related  
 876 communication. With the lessons learned from the ESPORT team, it was planned that a

877 Community of Practice would be introduced to the facilitators, and eventually to the  
878 learners as well.

879         A community system was implemented, using the Yahoo Groups website. This  
880 allowed the entire ESPORT team to be contacted via one e-mail, and provided an  
881 accessible archive of all messages. The project manager began using the Yahoo function  
882 to send out weekly digests about the ESPORT project, which greatly aided the sense of  
883 community.

884         There were several successes with using the Yahoo Groups, and also some less  
885 successful areas. The successes included an increase in information about the ESPORT  
886 project being circulated to all team members. When working from virtual offices as part  
887 of a large project, it can be difficult to get an overall picture of the work, as one tends to  
888 get focused on one's own contributions and little else. With greater awareness of issues  
889 facing the project, and of individuals' roles within the project, team members began to  
890 offer assistance to other members where possible.

891         Other strengths of the Yahoo group are the aforementioned *Update Digests*, sent  
892 out by the project manager. The use of one email to reach everyone has also been used  
893 when urgent questions needed to be answered. Mark Wallace works to follow up on any  
894 such questions that come in, ensuring that appropriate team members are providing  
895 answers.

896         One of the initial difficulties with the Yahoo group was that there was minimal  
897 buy-in to signing up and using the system by some ESPORT team members. The core  
898 members were all on-board, but there was a slow or non-existent response from some of  
899 the PLATO members. This was likely due to their need to respond to the demands of  
900 their full-time work with PLATO, but despite repeated attempts to establish these  
901 members as part of the community, success was limited.

902         As of February 2006, PLATO's employees are no longer part of the ESPORT  
903 group; however, their Canadian representatives are part of the community. Given  
904 ESPORT's new "arms-length" relationship with PLATO, there is greater autonomy,  
905 enabling the Yahoo Group to work with greater involvement than it ever has. Team

communication is at an all-time-high. The ESPORT team now works together freely without the need to use the project manager constantly as the chief conduit. With Patrick's continued *Update Digests*, the team is kept informed of big-picture issues regarding the ongoing developments of ESPORT.

The decision was made fairly early in the process not to attempt to implement the Community of Practice with facilitators until later. Their requirements to use and understand ESPORT, and then to understand PLATO, were considered priorities, without burdening them with another website to visit and use. One key discovery through the project member's Community of Practice is that there needs to be enough people using the site regularly in order for the community to develop. At the same time, there needs to be a compelling reason to use the site regularly. These findings will be invaluable when we proceed with designing and introducing a Community of Practice for facilitators.

Helpdesk. WERC receives any queries that are made by facilitators or interested visitors, and either responds to them or forwards them to the appropriate party who can answer the question. This process has been ongoing since April 2005, and has resulted in development and refining of a standard downloadable Help document that is now published on the ESPORT site.

Updating the database. The original ESPORT database only contained the Essential Skills that were measured by a specific complexity level. As ESPORT has expanded, the decision was made to update the database to include all possible Essential Skills, so that clients have an accurate picture of the requirements of their chosen occupation. The following Skills were added: Working With Others, Significant Use of Memory, Additional Information, Continuous Learning.

In the process of conducting this update, it was discovered that many of the HRSD Profiles had changed since the ESPORT database was first built. Some Profiles were no longer listed, and many had been renamed. WERC proceeded to make changes to the database and corresponding materials to reflect the changes on the HRSD website.

In addition, 26 new Profiles were added to the ESPORT databases, and several of the older Profiles were updated to reflect the way they have been aligned with PLATO courseware. An additional 20 Profiles are forthcoming from HRSD. The first 26 have been prepared and coded for alignment into PLATO. Upon receiving finalized versions of the new Profiles, they will be added into ESPORT as well.

All new and revised Profiles have been matched with InterOptions occupations, and the new Essential Skill of Critical Thinking has also been added to the new Profiles on the database. Critical Thinking has been aligned with PLATO courseware, wherever such articulation is possible. The result of this work is that ESPORT's databases are accurately reflecting the detail of the HRSD Profiles.

#### Learning materials

The following is a summary of activities related to the ESPORT system itself, including software changes and linkages to other resources.

HRSDC Authentic Materials. The learning materials comprising the HRSDC *Authentic Materials* have been recreated on the host server allowing the content to be made available from ESPORT. This removes the risk of "file not found" errors that tend to occur when relying on content that is managed by an external site. There have been instances where the external site has undergone revisions that impacted the file directory structure causing the database pointers to become outdated and that content data to be suddenly unavailable. The information is now stored entirely on the ESPORT site.

Example:

[http://www.esportfolio.com/esport/english/AuthenticMaterials/Specific\\_Authentic\\_Materials.cfm?TradePK=99](http://www.esportfolio.com/esport/english/AuthenticMaterials/Specific_Authentic_Materials.cfm?TradePK=99)

Clients are also able to search for *Authentic Materials* by skill type category, and may also use an optional complexity level filter to narrow the results even further. This enables a user to access materials that focus on a particular skill type and skill level, regardless of a restriction of trade.

Job Futures. *Job Futures* is a career tool to help clients plan for their future. It provides the following useful information about the various occupational groups.

- AT WORK (General Information)
  - What They Do
  - Where They Find Work — Top Occupational Areas
  - Some Related Occupation(s)
- EDUCATION, TRAINING, & EXPERIENCE
  - What You Need
  - Required/Related - Educational Programs\*
- WORK PROSPECTS
  - Current Conditions (example Poor-Very good, etc.)
- IMPORTANT FACTS
  - Wages
  - Part-Time/Full-Time (employment percentages)
  - Demographic Statistical Information (men/women)

The information within the *Job Futures* module has also been recreated on the host server, allowing the content to be made available directly from ESPORT. This again eliminates the errors due to missing files that tend to occur when simply using links to an external website. Clients have access to print versions for an easy-to-print information sheet. A quick link to the skill requirements is also available on each display of *Job Futures* for a trade.

Choose occupation (additional profiles). ESPORT has included an additional 70 occupation titles with descriptions and skill requirements for each. Skill and job task requirements for a small set of occupations remain missing, and will be included when the information becomes available.

The inclusion of the trade profiles has enabled ESPORT to broaden the data available in the set of occupation titles that exists within the Interest Inventory section. There are over 800 trade titles in the Interest inventory section compared to 237 that exist in the Choose Occupation section. This has been a challenge to integrate, as the trades in

the Interest Inventory are very specific in nature, whereas the trade titles in Choose Occupation tend to represent a general grouping. Please see the following example for an illustration:

Table: Choose Occupation

Plastic Products Assemblers, Finishers and Inspectors

Table: Interest inventory

Pattern of interest code

Plastic Products Assembler or Finisher

(Moi)

Plastic Products Inspector

(OMi)

Trades within the Interest Inventory are assigned to the closest match to the entry in the Choose Occupation set. In the above example you will notice that the more specific trades differ in pattern of interest code.

Many trades in the Interest Inventory have no matches. This is mostly due to a much higher skill level existing beyond the scope of ESPORT. This unfortunately results in the occasional instance where a client completing the Interest Inventory questionnaire achieves a pattern of interest code that contains very few matches of trades according to the individual's interests. If all occupations are included, it causes a type of disconnect between the details available for a user in terms of skills and interests. The following information would not be available: Skill requirements, job task requirements, Job Futures, etc.

There has been a tuning of the content display to ensure information for a particular trade is accessible with ease. The following links to supplemental information are available on each occupation detail page:

JOB FUTURES

PRINT VERSION

AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

SKILLS SUMMARY ANALYSIS

EARAT

The screenshot below (Figure 2) illustrates a typical Skills Summary Analysis. This allows a client to quickly identify the skills that they need to improve to reach the



1017 level that is deemed to be required for the occupation. (If lacking in a certain skill, the  
 1018 client is advised to use the learning materials and also to create a learning plan)

1019

1020 **Figure 2: Skills summary analysis - example**

### Skill Assessment

The following is a Summary Analysis of how well you measure up to the skill requirements of Assemblers and Inspectors, Electrical Appliance, Apparatus and Equipment Manufacturing.

- You meet or exceed the "maximum" requirements of this occupation for the following skills:
  - Reading Text
  - Document Use
  - Writing
  - Problem Solving
  - Job Task Planning
  - Finding Information
  - Computer Use
  
- You exceed the "minimum" requirements for this occupation for the following skills. However, since your skill level does not yet meet the "maximum" requirements it is recommended that you update these skills if you are interested in this occupation.
  - Numeracy
  - Oral Communication
  - Decision Making

*These results are based upon your scores from the Self Assessment as compared to the skill requirements of the occupation*

1021

1022       Spell check. A spell check feature has been implemented in various areas of the  
 1023       ESPORT website that allows clients to verify the spelling of the information that they  
 1024       provide in the development of their portfolio resumes. The areas where this feature has  
 1025       been implemented include the following:

- 1026           1. Education & Certificates
- 1027           2. Job History
- 1028           3. Life & Work Experiences
- 1029           4. Learning Plan (available for each skill category)
- 1030           5. Sending Resumes

1031       EARAT Skill Sheets (searchable). EARAT (*Evaluation for Academic Readiness for*  
 1032       *Apprenticeship Training*) provides academic skill sheets in reading, writing, and math.  
 1033       The client prints up these skill sheets, then works on their assignments with the help of a  
 1034       tutor. EARAT skill sheets are appropriate for people who are preparing to take college  
 1035       courses as part of trade preparation. The section pertaining to the EARAT Skill Sheets  
 1036       has been improved through the inclusion of a search interface allowing a client to search  
 1037       for skill sheets for a particular skill for a particular trade without going through the  
 1038       choose occupation route.

1039       French versioning preparation. There has been an extensive re-design of the  
 1040       database to allow ESPORT to display content in both English and French. All columns  
 1041       have been added to store the corresponding data in French. The original database was  
 1042       developed with separate tables for English and French content that had become  
 1043       inefficient in terms of restricting rapid development and made management of the  
 1044       database more difficult. Segmentation of the site has been accomplished to manage the  
 1045       display and query contents, and to improve the ease of integration with a multilingual  
 1046       format.

1047       XML (generation of profile data into format for LAN – WEB integration). This is  
 1048       a feature enabling a facilitator to press a button to launch a file-save mechanism to  
 1049       conveniently store a client's portfolio and personal information. This file stores the data  
 1050       in XML format which will in the near future allow a user using a LAN based system to

save their data on a disk and use a file upload mechanism on the web-based system to automatically create their account and seed their profile with the existing information. This will allow a client to continue working with ESPORT on the web without any interruption and without any loss of their information and assessment scores, etc.

Database migration scripts. Within a LAN based system that has a tight security restriction to the viewing of client supplied data, a system was needed to enable the remote updating of the database when changes were completed on the web system. A comprehensive script has been developed that will enable an administrator at a remote institution to run a set of procedures to perform a migration of client data into a revised database.

Statistics and reports. Evaluators and ESPORT administrators can go onto the ESPORT website to view current, dynamically created statistics in a variety of formats, and can also download reports as .csv files viewable or analyzable using MS-Excel or SPSS. The reports contain information on users, skill assessments scores, trades included in portfolios (by NOC codes), trades browsed or searched (again using NOC codes), and search terms used by clients in their career explorations.

Database changes allow an enhanced query enabling the ESPORT system to highlight the most important essential skills for each of the trades. This informs users of the skills most critical for a particular trade, and shows them how well they measure up (assuming they have completed the self-assessment section). The resulting comparison is used to recommend the key elements of a learning plan for skill development and improvement.

Monitoring requests for information on ESPORT from the public. For monitoring and promotion of the pilot project, and of users given temporary trial ESPORT accounts, information is now routinely gathered on *Request For Information* contacts. This utility enables reviewing the details in any message requesting information, including "Site," "Facilitator," "Organization," "Account Creation Date," and "Status." The information can be browsed from all manager and facilitator accounts within ESPORT, with a filter available for such criteria as "Site" and "Role." The

module contains an e-mail-friendly text feature, allowing high level administrators to copy email addresses to send a reply quickly and efficiently.

Newsletter. An ESORT newsletter has been developed and published from time to time to provide information to users, and to publish results of the demonstration project. The second issue, which appeared in fall 2005, is available at [http://www.esportfolio.com/Project\\_Site/index.cfm?display=newsletter&Edition=edition2](http://www.esportfolio.com/Project_Site/index.cfm?display=newsletter&Edition=edition2).

### Server changes

Since the stand-alone server was deployed to Prince Albert (PA), Chris Rogers worked on testing the installation, and on upgrading the server for PA and for future deployments. These changes will facilitate a more streamlined approach to stand-alone servers, making them less likely to become infected with a virus or other potentially destructive spyware or trojan, however small the risk.

The first thing implemented was a backup scheme for the learner database, to a USB memory stick. This provided a tertiary method of backing up learner data on the stand-alone server, in the event of a complete server failure. Additionally, this method of backing up, deployed in January 2006, will assist in rolling out updates to all standalone servers in future.

Secondly, and most importantly, was the setup of the Windows Server Update Services (WSUS). This service allows deployment of updates from Microsoft Windows to the standalone servers in the field, and other machines running Microsoft Windows operating systems. The WSUS was sent out in January and installed on the PA server in February. Future server deployments will already have the WSUS installed and updates can be sent to the institutions on a quarterly basis. Another ESORT consultant is currently working on a method of installing the WSUS updates to the stand alone servers that will be easier than the current method of restoring from multiple DVD's using two software packages. Ideally a single script should be able to do most of the update with minimal interaction from institution staff.

1108 Another web server was setup in mid-February 2006 for ESPORT technical  
 1109 personnel to use as a standalone test web server, completely isolated from the internet.  
 1110 This will aid in testing of the ESPORT website for standalone servers.

1111 Other

1112 Based on experiences, observations, and evaluation findings to date, the  
 1113 following are activities, issues, and opportunities to be explored, as the project  
 1114 continues.

1115 1. General

- 1116 a. Occasional reports will continue to be provided, to assure that
- 1117 significant developments are noted and monitored in a timely way.
- 1118 b. Training approaches and contents will continue to be assessed in
- 1119 relation to trainee feedback and subsequent facilitator behaviour.
- 1120 Changes to make the training more efficient will be implemented and
- 1121 assessed as required.

1122 2. Cape Breton

- 1123 a. This has been a disappointing adoption, due to low usage levels,
- 1124 delayed adoption at some sites, and technical issues.
- 1125 b. Usage levels will continue to be monitored; where usage is low,
- 1126 attempts will be made to determine whether specific issues exist that
- 1127 might be addressed. Centres where usage is higher, and where client
- 1128 recruitment is creative (e.g., TEC), will continue to be the priority for
- 1129 evaluation.
- 1130 c. Technical issues, such as the newly encountered “enrolment lag”
- 1131 problem, will be addressed.
- 1132 d. The complementarity or compatibility of ESPORT with other tools
- 1133 (such as CHOICES) will be explicitly demonstrated, where
- 1134 appropriate based on client needs.
- 1135 e. Usage and usefulness of PLATO will be assessed.

- 1136 3. ACCESS, Vancouver
- 1137 a. The potential problem of facilitators perceiving a lack of time for
- 1138 ESPORT, which appeared in the readiness assessment, will be
- 1139 monitored, as will client usage.
- 1140 b. The need for further training, as was supplied in Cape Breton, will be
- 1141 monitored.
- 1142 4. John Howard Society, Ottawa
- 1143 a. The impact of the training differences that were implemented in these
- 1144 centres will be monitored.
- 1145 b. The suggestions and questions generated by the facilitators at the end
- 1146 of their training session will be analyzed and addressed.
- 1147 c. These trainees had considerably less exposure to PLATO, and to the
- 1148 processes and purposes of the project's evaluation. Their needs for
- 1149 more information in these areas will be monitored, and response
- 1150 made as appropriate.
- 1151 5. Saskatchewan Penitentiary
- 1152 a. The experience and feedback from this site has been positive, detailed,
- 1153 and useful to the project. Sask Pen will continue to receive attention
- 1154 as part of the evaluation, as the results continue to appear applicable.
- 1155 b. Making ESPORT available in the LAN version has made the system
- 1156 more robust and positively redundant.
- 1157 6. SUCCESS, ISS, and MOSAIC
- 1158 a. Negotiations involve the three implementing agencies, and Service
- 1159 Canada (EBSM), national HRSDC, and HRSDC's regional Human
- 1160 Rights Program (HRP). The target for implementation is February
- 1161 2006, pending agreements with the funding agencies. Facilitator
- 1162 training will take place separately at each of the three sites.
- 1163 7. Metis Employment Services, Aboriginal Futures

- 1164                   a. These sites commenced ESPORT demonstration project operations in  
1165                   January 2006.
- 1166       8. The virtual community initiative
- 1167                   a. This concept is still evolving and changing as the project also evolves.
- 1168                   b. The intention to create and sustain a virtual community of practice,  
1169                   using technologies and based on experience with ESPORT, appears to  
1170                   be increasingly valid, as the number of project participants increases,  
1171                   and more is learned about what constitutes good practice with  
1172                   ESPORT.
- 1173                   c. Users constitute a potentially large and useful source of evaluation  
1174                   feedback for the project, especially as more conclusions are reached  
1175                   based on direct experience. The VC will be consulted, as appropriate,  
1176                   to vet evaluation findings and conclusions.
- 1177       9. Evolution of training
- 1178                   a. Training has undergone radical evolution. As the project  
1179                   commenced, training had been mainly PLATO's responsibility.  
1180                   Beginning with the John Howard implementation, in mid-2005,  
1181                   training was taken over by CEP.
- 1182                   b. The word "training" is less accurate, as the sessions are more on the  
1183                   model of "facilitated learning." Facilitators and learners often attend  
1184                   the same sessions (if the trainee-facilitators agree). They go through  
1185                   the normal process with a support person in the background, and a  
1186                   *Facilitator's Guide* for reference.
- 1187                   c. With experience, a shift in emphasis in the implementation also  
1188                   occurred. Facilitators were encouraged to view the Portfolio Builder  
1189                   section as the foundation; Interest Inventory, Self-Assessment, and  
1190                   Learning Materials were seen as supports.

- d. The issue of student completion of essential aspects of ESPORT was identified in late 2005. A report on this issue will be included in the final report.
- e. PLATO training will take place once facilitators are comfortable with ESPORT. This should address the problem of loss of learning through overload.

#### 10. Future of PLATO

- a. In November 2005, PLATO learning Inc. closed its Canadian division. This looked ominous at first, but PLATO's president has now assured CEP that "we fully intend to honor our commitments and to expand our relationships in Canada in a responsible and organized way."
- b. The closure is disappointing for PLATO's Canadian representatives, who have invested considerable faith and personal effort in helping ESPORT grow its wings.
- c. The closure has also put CEP in the interesting position of having to answer queries about marketing, schedule and provide training, and provide technical support (at least temporarily) for the PLATO system.
- d. Although there are legally binding agreements with PLATO, these developments may provide an opportunity to review the relative value of PLATO in the overall picture and the way it is offered within the package, to structure a more independent marketing strategy, and build a Canadian training team.

#### 11. Completion

- a. The finding that clients often do not complete all of ESPORT has been noted at all sites. The meaning of this phenomenon remains to be analyzed, and will continue to be investigated. It is a matter of concern that clients do not complete the Portfolio, as this is the part of ESPORT that uniquely involves clients in assessment of their own



1220 skills and interests. On the other hand, there is reason to believe that  
 1221 at least some users terminate ESPORT after having achieved  
 1222 something useful; their non-completion may be seen as a sign of  
 1223 accomplishment of their immediate objectives.

1224 b. The notion that clients working in cohorts may accomplish more than  
 1225 those working in one-to-one relationships with facilitators or  
 1226 counselors has been made (Saltiel and Russo, 2001). This concept will  
 1227 be explored further in the final phase of the project.

1228

### 1229 **Emerging project findings (tentative)**

1230 While the project continues, and the original plans and intentions are still in  
 1231 place, some tentative findings are already being identified. In some cases, these findings  
 1232 are of sufficient significance, and are sufficiently well supported by the evidence, that  
 1233 they have already been acted upon. All are tentative, and may be further impacted by  
 1234 events still transpiring in the project. They are offered here as preliminary findings, and  
 1235 as indications of possible eventual outcomes of the project.

### 1236 Training

1237 Experience with the process of training new facilitators has led to several  
 1238 tentative conclusions. First, it was clear that facilitators required different amounts of  
 1239 ESPORT training, and different types of training experiences, based upon their previous  
 1240 experience with computers, online training systems, computer-assisted learning, adult  
 1241 education, and use of online counseling tools. Early in the project it was decided that  
 1242 the standard training approach would be modified as needed: where the outcomes of  
 1243 training required it, retraining or additional training has been offered.

1244 It was also clear early in program that facilitator turnover at the sites would  
 1245 necessitate regular – even frequent – retraining. Throughout the project, maintaining the  
 1246 presence of adequately training facilitators at each site has been a challenge. There is, of

1247 course, nothing that can be done about the fact that trained people leave their jobs, but it  
1248 was somewhat surprising how often facilitators moved out of positions, changed  
1249 employers, or, for various reasons, stopped dealing directly with clients who were  
1250 ESPORE candidates. In the mature adaptation of ESPORE, on-site expertise could be  
1251 used to assure the training of newcomers, but in the project this solution could not be  
1252 counted upon.

1253 Over time, it was decided that including clients in the training experience could  
1254 have benefits for all parties. The option of including clients was offered to trainees after  
1255 the Cape Breton training; facilitators were urged to bring a client of their choice with  
1256 them to the training, after explaining that the client would be a co-trainee of this  
1257 experience. The offer was not a requirement, however, and some programs have chosen  
1258 not to do so, for various reasons (often related to the level of confidence or experience of  
1259 the facilitators, or the related desire not to appear unprepared to their clients). Where  
1260 clients have attended, trainers believe that the results are better: facilitators are more  
1261 focused on the training content, collaboration between the facilitator and the client offers  
1262 genuine training benefits, and continued use of ESPORE in the program after training is  
1263 more common.

1264 Facilitators often observed that their understanding of ESPORE increased with  
1265 use, and the more immediately they used ESPORE after the training the more competent  
1266 and confident they felt with the system. Additional training could also add to  
1267 understanding and expertise with ESPORE, but the most important factor in facilitator  
1268 understanding and effective use of ESPORE appears to be direct experience with real  
1269 clients back in the home program. This reinforces the importance of early use and  
1270 application of new ESPORE skills immediately after training.

### 1271 Time commitment

1272 Where programs did not make significant use of ESPORE after training, the most  
1273 common explanation was the amount of time that the program required, on the part of  
1274 the facilitator with the client, and on the part of clients with the system. It appears that

programs are often not accustomed to spending extended time with individual clients, as ESPORT demands. (The developers recommend that 14 to 16 hours be allocated to initial ESPORT activities, dependent upon client readiness and needs; see Attachment 10.) Programs, it appears, usually spend considerably shorter amounts of time with clients, and do not develop counseling plans systematically for most cases. Clients become used to “dropping in” to the training agency, but not necessarily to planning to attend regularly for the time required, over multiple days/appointments, to complete the full process. This became clear early in the project, and was a topic during training, in order to attempt to prepare facilitators; however, the issue remained a limitation and a factor.

One of the implications of the discovery of the problem of convincing facilitators and clients to devote time to the ESPORT process was to consider how the total time required could be divided into smaller units. A suggestion that emerged after considerable experience was that blocks of time, or steps, might be offered to clients for completing the ESPORT process. Clients would be advised of the time needed to complete a step of the program, but would not commit to the next step until the first was successfully finished. Steps could correspond to clusters of the units suggested in Attachment 10:

Step 1 (preparation)

- **Preparing and engaging client** – (1 hr)
- **Registration and Introduction** of the program – (1 hr)
- **Interest Inventory** – (1 hr)

Step 2 (self-assessment)

- **Walking client through the essential skills / areas of self-assessment** – (2 hrs)
- **Guiding client through choosing an occupation and using resources** – (2 – 3 hrs)

Step 3 (portfolio)

- **Portfolio building** – Clients spent a lot of time in building the portfolio. They had difficulty in putting ideas into words. Much more input from the counselor is required. I have come to realize that I did not spend enough time with my clients when they were building their portfolio in terms of guidance

and assistance. – (3 – 4 hr) More time will be required if the client wants to build more than one portfolio.

Step 4 (learning plan)

- **Learning Plan** – (2 hrs)
- **Review** /interpret **Portfolio** and follow-up plan – (2 hrs)

Step 5 (conclusion, job search)

The initial block of time would be for the preparatory stages, after which would follow a block of time for self-assessment and career exploration. A final stage might be actual career choice and preparation of the portfolio and résumé related to career choices. This approach divides the amount of time required into smaller units, and permits the student to complete part of the whole process before committing to the next part. This approach was viewed as having merit, and was proposed for assessment in the final stages of the project. (*Occasional Report #17* was produced to describe this idea more fully.)

Client outcomes

Data were collected in various forms throughout the project on clients' adaptation to ESPORT, especially through the comments of facilitators working directly with clients. These reports provided information about client adaptation and any problems or issues with use of the ESPORT system. Findings of the surveys are reported elsewhere (see Attachments 8 and 9 for general results, and Attachments 1 and 3 for results from the Saskatchewan Penitentiary; Tables 1, 4, and 6, indirectly describe, through usage patterns, client adaptation).

In relation to career thinking, Tables 7, 8, 9, and 10 contain information about the careers that clients considered in the process of working through the ESPORT process. In summary, it appears that clients' interests clustered in the following areas (taken from the contents of their portfolios and learning plans, and from their browsing within various career information databases):

- small-business (ownership and counseling)

- 1340       • construction trades (helpers and laborers)
- 1341       • clerks (administrative, library, and accounting)
- 1342       • heritage and environmental
- 1343       • nursery and greenhouse
- 1344       • special events planning and management
- 1345       • human resources
- 1346       • nursing (aides, orderlies, and patient services)
- 1347       • teaching assistant (elementary, early childhood, and secondary school)
- 1348       • retail
- 1349       • fishing and food services

1350       In terms of attitudes, from survey results was clear that both clients and  
 1351 facilitators viewed ESPORT highly positively; all results were skewed to the positive end  
 1352 of the Likert scales used (Attachments 6, 8, and 9) . There were some minor differences  
 1353 in emphasis: facilitators tended to feel more strongly than clients that ESPORT portfolios  
 1354 would be useful for job-search, while clients would prefer to use ESPORT more. The  
 1355 printed products of the ESPORT process, including résumés and printouts of career  
 1356 searches and self-assessments, and the ability to transfer ESPORT profiles and records to  
 1357 other ESPORT systems if the client moved, were cited as useful.

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## ATTACHMENT 1

August 29, 2005, notes from Saskatchewan Penitentiary

Regarding experiences with a client, Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. (Composed by an on-site facilitator):

In the process of working with a young man a few weeks ago, I asked if he would be willing to work with me on the resume portion of ESPOUT. He agreed and we went through to it. He had decided with the help of the facilitator operating the pilot project in the classroom, to apply for a job as AUTOMOTIVE ASSEMBLY CHECKER AND TESTER through the InterOptions portion of the program.

We went through the academic section and he had a full Grade 11 and was 19 years old. I asked him what jobs he had had. He replied that the only real "job" had been as Cook in a Pizza shop. I said that was fine and asked what he had had to do in that job.

He looked at me as if I were dumb and also a bit sheepishly, said, "I cooked pizzas. I told you - I was a cook there." I replied very quietly and gently that "I can't quite agree with that. I have stood and waited while my pizza was being prepared and I know it isn't only cooking."

So:

Q. Did you ever have to answer the phone?

A Yes

Q What kind of information did you have to get?

A Lots - their name, address, phone, what they wanted on the pizza, size etc.

Q Did it have to be accurate

A Of course.

Q OK, so you already know then that you did more than cook. Now let's look at what this program wants from you.

Of course, the program starts with the 10 Essential Skills and in a dialogue box, describes what the auto assembler etc. would have to do in the situation exacting the skill. The one I remember best was something like this:

"Interpersonal Interactions. At the beginning of a new shift the auto assembler (etc.) would have to advise the newly arriving staff of incidents on the previous shift and of any changes policy or procedures that had come up on the last shift."

Q Did you ever have to do that?

A No.

Q Well, let's see - what time did the shift change at your shop?

A 2pm.

Q Did you ever have to tell them that you were running out of sauce?

A No.

Q Did you ever have to tell them that at sometime, let's say 4:30, someone is coming to pick up 30 pizzas for a party or something like that?

A Well – yes, I did sometimes, but not all the time.

Q. Would you like to put something like that in the box (where he would write his experience)?

A. OK.

All the time we worked together- about an hour and a half - he answered the questions and chose what he would write down. Several times he added information.

Once the Essential Skill area had been completed, he asked the program to show him the whole resume. Once he read it he turned to me and with wide eyes said, "Oh, I guess I really DID do a lot of things in that job!"

To test out the resume, I asked his permission to use it but to take out his name, address, etc., all except the academic and age, and the experience portions. I then phoned [a local international company] here. Over lunch a few days later their Director of Human Resources read over the resume and said, "This is exactly the kind of information I need. It has the skills listed on the left and I don't have to go looking for them. The proof is listed on the right in his description of his job experience. Usually I



have to read resumes and then phone to ask a lot of questions to get the proof information. For example, everybody writes 'trustworthy' on their application, but who is going to say he is NOT trustworthy, so it sometimes takes me over an hour to get the information out of him that proves he has that quality. In this format it is all right there".

The only thing she found missing is the proof of Ability to Learn - she advised that she could see this from Certificates earned, i.e., WHMIS, etc., and Volunteer Experiences.

I then phoned an international automobile manufacturer in Ontario and asked the same questions. Her immediate reaction was to say he would be screened out because of lack of Grade 12. I asked her to put that aside - assume he HAS Grade 12 - now what? She advised that they have their own application form with the info THEY want on. When she gave this one a bit more thought, she said it would get him a phone call (if he had Gr. 12), that would put him into the first round of a multi-level screening process their company goes through.

In both interviews the interviewee had more than 15 years of human resources experience.

I left this exercise thinking these things:

1. I am convinced that this format of resume would put a person into a screening process if nothing else. Two major industrial employers are enough to satisfy me on that score.
2. It is unrealistic, given my experience with the student, to think that we will ever be able to put someone with little to no work experience in front of this program and leave him/her on their own to follow it all through effectively.
3. Mediating the experience is extremely important- asking open-ended questions in an unthreatening way and waiting till he sorts it out and says it out. This puts an onus on the training to be very applications oriented.

4. The trainer (or one of them) will have to be able to create an atmosphere of trust in which the facilitators will be willing to exercise their imaginations and practice almost counseling-type techniques to draw the information from the clients. They will need to be able to empower the client to articulate that experience to the computer program.
5. In discussions with a teacher of Learning Disabled students, we talked about those clients who may be able to articulate but have little to no computer experience. This led us to the possibility of using Dragon Naturally Speaking- an inexpensive program that allows the client to speak and it writes the data onto the screen for him/her. This would free up time that is currently used in the client coming to terms with the keyboard.

## ATTACHMENT 2

*Table 12: Results of Readiness Questionnaire, Ottawa John Howard Society*

**November 2005 (ranked from most to least agreement)**

<b>Questionnaire item<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>
9. Contact the project administrator (Patrick) when necessary.	8.1	1.77
13. Know where to go for assistance if needed.	7.7	2.29
11. Contact the project evaluators when necessary.	7.4	2.30
14. Have the right technology for the project.	8.6	1.99
8. Recognize outcomes or findings important to the evaluation.	5.5	2.17
15. Be able to use the project's technologies.	7.9	1.86
5. Explain the evaluation model (PAR) to clients.	4.3	1.89
6. Participate in the evaluation process.	5.0	2.08
7. Communicate using various technologies.	6.7	2.29
2. Show clients how to get started with ESPORT.	8.0	1.91
1. Explain ESPORT to clients.	6.6	2.07
12. Make time for everything the project requires me to do.	4.7	0.95

<sup>1</sup>Scale: 0 = I am not at all ready; I am very uncomfortable with this

10 = I am completely ready; I am perfectly comfortable with this

**ATTACHMENT 3**

November 8, 2005 – Letter from Saskatchewan Penitentiary facilitator:

The longer I work with ESPORT, the more impressed I am with it! Between the interview and ESPORT, I am able to derive enough information to write a report for the employment part of the correction plan and a more thorough in-depth report. In general, other than the resume, most offenders are able to complete the interview and ESPORT within 1.5 - 2.0 hours. The resume adds another 1 -2 hours to the process depending on the person doing it.

Initially, I was uncertain about the benefit of doing a resume in the intake process. However, I now see it as a valuable tool. It is amazing how many assumptions are dispelled because of it! The resume gives me a very clear picture of the employment history, as material is automatically arranged chronologically. As the resume asks for a job title and a job description, further valuable information is gleaned from this.

I also see the resume as a useful method of goal setting or dreaming. It allows the offender to see where they are now and gives them a sense of what they need to do to achieve their goal/dream.

Whether an offender chooses to actually use the ESPORT resume or not, he now has in his possession the information he needs to write one. He has done the thinking about his employment history, education history, and related certificates. I have been putting the resume on a disk and giving it to the offender, informing him that the resume can be updated before they leave the institution.

I do like the "In-depth Report" that is generated from the Interest Inventory. I would love to see the detailed report expanded to include the results of the 10 Essential Skills, thus putting everything into one report. I realize that the results of the 10 Essential Skills are available through the occupation choice to demonstrate how the offender stacks up against the Essential Skills requirements for that occupation. I really like the fact that ESPORT does that, but I would still like to see it appear in the detailed report.

The server is up and running and so far, I have had no difficulties with it. From my perspective, things are going well!

With warmest regards,

[Name]  
Sask Pen, PA

February 3, 2006 - Letter from Saskatchewan Penitentiary facilitator:

Since I took over the ESPORT program in September 2005, I have had 42 referrals for it. Of this 42, 30 files have been completed. Of the 30 files, for security reasons, 3 were not permitted to come to the school to do ESPORT and 1 refused to do it because he did not want to disclose "personal information" by answering the questions in ESPORT and doing the resume. Of the remaining 12 (of the 42), 6 are part way through it and 6 are waiting to do it.

The response to ESPORT by the offenders has been very positive (other than the one that refused to even look at it). [The coordinator] has devised an evaluation form for the guys to fill out upon completion of ESPORT. So far, there have been no complaints. Upon completion of ESPORT, I give the offender a hard copy of everything he has done and their results along with a computer disk which contains the same information....

I have found that the more computer literate and high functioning the offender is, the shorter the time it takes to complete ESPORT. The record time to date is 1.5 hours. Of course, the reverse is also true, the less computer literate and lower functioning they are, the longer it takes - an average of 3 to 4.5 hours....

With the principal's encouragement and permission, I have been doing "information sessions" in some of the classrooms. Most of my "self-referrals" have come from this....

As I have the time, and I have not been in touch with you lately, I felt it was time to touch base.

I am very pleased with the way the server is running, and I have not run into any major glitches that hinder its use.

With warmest regards,

[name]  
Sask Pen, PA

## ATTACHMENT 4

### Client completion of ESPORT activities:

#### Question:

*We're seeing, at pretty well all of our sites, that a certain number of clients are getting started - creating an account and getting through the early stages like the interest inventory - but they aren't "finishing" the process and walking out with a training plan. So what I'd like to hear from you is why you think this might be happening; are they getting frustrated somewhere, or are counselors maybe using just selected portions of the ESPORT system and not worrying about doing the whole thing, or...?*

#### Response #1:

I have mentioned before that the program is seeking an audience. Most people that started the program haven't gone on because they haven't found any real value in it. We have had a mix of youth, and older people use ESPORT, and although they found it interesting, there was no desire to do a learning plan to bring up their essential skills. One reason is that many met the highest number (5) for many of the occupations offered. Also we use the CHOICES software in our Centre and clients find it much more interesting and informative to use than ESPORT.

We have tried to utilize the PLATO software to assist people preparing to write GED, but the technical difficulties associated with that have made it frustrating to use. We have worked through all the technical problems here at the Centre, but many clients are not prepared to stick with it. Besides, we have PLATO stand alone software that is easy to use.

Other groups in our consortium have pretty well ceased trying to use ESPORT because the technical difficulties were too much to deal with and they just said the heck with it. Everyone is busy with their duties, and the time is just not there to experiment with this program. That being said, we are still trying to find clients we can run through the program and I am hoping to get some high school students interested.

#### Response #2:

[Summary of a telephone interview]: The training we received was during the summer; we've had some busy time when we weren't able to get into ESPORT as well as some staff turnover. So the fact that our skills are rusty has been a deterrent. Patrick came out and did some refresher training on the ESPORT side; that was helpful and we've been using it more since that time...there hasn't been any retraining on the PLATO side, though. If we could get brushed up again on that component of the program our usage there might pick up too.

When we tried to get students from the ESPORT side to the PLATO side, we discovered that their accounts didn't carry over - it was necessary to create them new usernames and passwords before they could get going in PLATO. That was a nuisance.

## ATTACHMENT 5

Table 13: Results of Readiness Questionnaire, all ESPORT sites

Questionnaire item <sup>1</sup>	Cape Breton			ACCESS – Vancouver			JHS – Ottawa		
	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Mean	S.D.	Rank
1. Explain ESPORT to clients.	6.2	1.94	14	4.5*	2.33	15	6.6*	2.07	8
2. Show clients how to get started with ESPORT.	6.3*	1.97	13	5.6	3.99	12	8.0*	1.91	3
3. Explain PLATO to clients.	6.5	2.26	11	5.4	3.62	13	n/a <sup>2</sup>		
4. Show clients how to get started with PLATO.	6.5	2.07	11	5.7	4.03	11	n/a		
5. Explain the evaluation model (PAR) to clients.	6.8**	1.94	8	4.6	3.11	14	4.3**	1.89	12
6. Participate in the evaluation process.	6.7	2.07	9	6.1	4.19	10	5.0	2.08	10
7. Communicate using various technologies.	6.7	1.51	9	7.1	3.27	7	6.7	2.29	7
8. Recognize outcomes or findings important to the evaluation.	8.3**	1.75	6	8.6**	1.41	5	5.5**,**	2.17	9
9. Contact the project administrator when necessary.	9.5	0.84	1	9.6*	1.06	1	8.1*	1.77	2
10. Contact the PLATO trainer when necessary.	9.2	0.98	5	9.6	1.06	1	n/a		
11. Contact the project evaluators	9.3*	1.03	3	9.6**	1.06	1	7.4**,**	2.30	6





## ATTACHMENT 6

Client Survey

November 2005

Please respond, by mail, e-mail, or fax (see below) to these statements using the following ratings:

SA - Strongly agree  
 A - Agree  
 NS - Not sure, no opinion  
 D - Disagree  
 SD - Strongly Disagree

Site (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ Cape Breton  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ACCESS (BC)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ JHS (Ottawa)

**(Circle one:)**

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| 1. ESPORT has been helpful to me.                                      | SD D NS A SA |
| 2. I would rather use ESPORT than other career exploration tools.      | SD D NS A SA |
| 3. I understand what ESPORT is intended do for me.                     | SD D NS A SA |
| 4. Whenever I had any questions about ESPORT, they were answered.      | SD D NS A SA |
| 5. I would like to use ESPORT more.                                    | SD D NS A SA |
| 6. I am comfortable using computers.                                   | SD D NS A SA |
| 7. I found the ESPORT <i>interest inventory</i> useful.                | SD D NS A SA |
| 8. ESPORT is easy to use.  | SD D NS A SA |
| 9. I found the ESPORT <i>self-assessment</i> useful.                   | SD D NS A SA |
| 10. I found the ESPORT <i>portfolio builder</i> useful.                | SD D NS A SA |
| 11. I found PLATO useful.  | SD D NS A SA |
| 12. I found some occupations I am interested in using ESPORT.          | SD D NS A SA |
| 13. I am working on my ESPORT <i>learning plan</i> .                   | SD D NS A SA |
| 14. I know my potential occupational skills better after using ESPORT. | SD D NS A SA |
| 15. I intend to use my ESPORT <i>portfolio</i> when I look for a job.  | SD D NS A SA |

Comments:

PS: We would like to talk to some survey respondents briefly by telephone. If you are willing to take part in a 5 – 10 minute phone interview about ESPORT, please give your phone number, and time when we can reach you, here:

Facilitator Survey

November 2005

Please respond to the following statements using the following ratings:

- SA - Strongly agree  
 A - Agree  
 NS - Not sure, no opinion  
 D - Disagree  
 SD - Strongly Disagree

(Circle one):

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| 1. ESSPORT has been helpful to me.   | SD D NS A SA |
| 2. I would rather use ESSPORT than other career exploration tools.           | SD D NS A SA |
| 3. I understand what ESSPORT is intended to do for me.                       | SD D NS A SA |
| 4. Whenever I had any questions about ESSPORT, they were answered.           | SD D NS A SA |
| 5. I would like to use ESSPORT more with my clients.                         | SD D NS A SA |
| 6. I am comfortable using computers.   | SD D NS A SA |
| 7. My clients find the ESSPORT <i>interest inventory</i> useful.             | SD D NS A SA |
| 8. ESSPORT is easy to use.   | SD D NS A SA |
| 9. My clients find the ESSPORT <i>self-assessment</i> useful.                | SD D NS A SA |
| 10. My clients find the ESSPORT <i>portfolio builder</i> useful.             | SD D NS A SA |
| 11. My clients find PLATO useful.  | SD D NS A SA |
| 12. My clients find some occupations they are interested in using            |              |
| 13. ESSPORT.   | SD D NS A SA |
| 14. My clients are working on their ESSPORT <i>learning plans</i> .          | SD D NS A SA |
| 15. My clients know their potential occupational skills better after         |              |
| 16. using ESSPORT.   | SD D NS A SA |
| 17. My clients intend to use the ESSPORT <i>portfolio</i> when they look for |              |
| a job.   | SD D NS A SA |

Comments (please add anything you wish below):

**ATTACHMENT 7***Cover-letter to facilitators regarding survey*

Dear [Facilitator]:

As part of the evaluation of ESPORT, an interim report is being prepared. The report will describe how ESPORT is being used, and hopefully will point out areas where changes are needed (as well as documenting what is working well).

As preparation for the interim report, I would like to ask two things of you:

1. To complete and return to me the attached "Facilitator Survey," giving your own views.
2. To ask any clients who are able to complete the "Client Survey."

The surveys can be mailed back to me, or, better, can be e-mailed to [patf@athabascau.ca](mailto:patf@athabascau.ca), or faxed (toll-free) to 866-514-6234. I would appreciate receiving these by Monday, December 5, if at all possible.

All replies are strictly confidential. The forms are marked to show they are from the Cape, but no other identification is required, and participants will not be identified in any way in the interim report that will include this information.

If you or your clients have any questions, please e-mail or phone me at the toll-free number above.

Thank you, as ever, for your ongoing help with this evaluation.

Sincerely,

Pat Fahy  
ESPORT Project Evaluator

PS: Please complete the survey for yourself, even if you don't have clients who can participate. Thanks!

## ATTACHMENT 8

### Response to Facilitator Survey: Comments

1. Sorry, only one client has used it and they were getting rather irritated at the length of time it was taking to do all the different areas. I believe I will do just bits of the options with clients, then give them their passwords so that they can move through it at their own speed, and then get their own results. I have not answered the survey as I have only one client who was willing to do this. Others who are coming in have definite plans, registered for school, etc., so for some it is useful. I wonder if this program isn't more suited to high school evaluations from what we used to be called guidance counselors. And speaking of counselors, you don't have those listed in your area of careers.
2. My experience has been limited thus far. It is hard to get clients to stick with it.
3. working with clients who are lacking in a considerable amount of skills, I find ESPORT a very useful tool. They seem to be a few problems that still need attention.
4. The clients I enrolled in ESPORT had very little difficulty with the actual program; however, did express that it wasn't as user-friendly as it could be. Most clients agreed that they would not feel comfortable sending a resume that was created in ESPORT to an employer. Clients were concerned the resume would be too long and in an unacceptable format. We also experienced, from time to time, technical difficulties while waiting for account activations for new users. Otherwise, ESPORT is a useful tool for determining what areas of the essential skills need additional work. Clients were receptive of the program, however many did not follow through due to time constraints.
5. Technical issues have been a problem. Nothing that couldn't be worked out, but it took time and persistence, something that led to the discontinuation of the program by some facilitators. Again, we searched for clients that this program is right for.
6. Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond my control, the clients here at the [name] center were not given the opportunity to participate in the project. Therefore, no information that might have been useful for this project was obtained from this initial test site.

I do wish to apologize for not being able to participate in the project. I was looking forward to this new experience, as I have an academic background in survey research and would have appreciated this new learning opportunity. However, due to circumstances beyond my control, was not given permission by the management here at my center to participate in the project. I do hope that you have been able to collect enough information from the other test sites in the region to be able to come toward some substantive conclusions as to the usefulness of ESPORT in academic and employment support service fields.

7. I have gotten my clients to do this [survey] but have not asked for feedback from them [about whether they have actually completed the form].
8. After working with the program I can say that I find it very useful tool. Unfortunately, I clients didn't have the level of commitment needed when approaching a program such as ESPORT. Without that, the program cannot be used as fully as it could be. I think the concept is a great idea and I really like the program. In career exploration we tend to use the CHOICES program but the ESPORT program is useful and it could play a big part in career development. Perhaps more marketing and endorsement through Service Canada would make the program more successful.
9. Sorry I'm not able to offer much of my thoughts or opinions about ESPORT because we have not been using it as part of our client assessment tools. I took the initial training that was offered but have not had the opportunity to actually use it. I guess it is up to our employer of their going to use ESPORT as an assessment tool.

#### Clients

1. I really like working with ESPORT and think that everyone would benefit from it.

## ATTACHMENT 9

Response to Facilitator Survey: Frequencies

Table 14: Responses to the Facilitator Survey

#	<u>Survey Item</u>	Mean- total	Rank- total	Mean- clients	Rank- client	Mean- facilitators	Rank- facilitators
6	I am comfortable using computers.	3.73	1	4	1.5	3.67	1
11	I found PLATO useful. Whenever I had any questions about ESPORT, they were answered.	3.5	2	3.5	4	3.5	2
4	I know my potential occupational skills better after using ESPORT.	3.47	3	3.33	7	3.5	3
14	I understand what ESPORT is intended do for me.	3.3	4	4	1.5	3.13	7
3	I would like to use ESPORT more.	3.27	5	3.33	7	3.25	5
5	I found the ESPORT <i>interest inventory</i> useful.	3.23	6	3	12.5	3.3	4
7	I intend to use my ESPORT <i>portfolio</i> when I look for a job.	3.17	7	3.33	7	3.11	9
15	I found the ESPORT <i>self-assessment</i> useful	3.13	8	3.67	3	2.8	14
9	I found some occupations I am interested in using ESPORT.	3.1	9	3	12.5	3.14	6
12	ESPORT has been helpful to me	3.09	10	3	12.5	3.13	8
1	I found the ESPORT <i>portfolio builder</i> useful.	3.08	11	3.33	7	3	10
10	I am working on my ESPORT <i>learning plan</i> .	3	12	3.33	7	2.86	12
13	ESPORT is easy to use.	3	12	3.33	7	2.89	11
8	I would rather use ESPORT than other career exploration tools.	2.86	14	3	12.5	2.82	13
2		2.64	15	2.67	15	2.63	15

Table 14 show levels of activity as of November 25, 2005, for Cape Breton, Vancouver (ACCESS), and Ottawa (John Howard Society). (Note that Saskatchewan Penitentiary, a non-project site, is not included in these figures.)

**Table 15: Client activity levels, by site (November 25, 2005)**

	<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>Cape Breton</b>					<b>Ottawa</b>	<b>Tot</b>
<b>Activity</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	<b>BEO</b>	<b>NWEO</b>	<b>TEC</b>	<b>WAC</b>	<b>YMCAs</b>	<b>JHS</b>	
Has Learning Plan(s)	2	0	1	2	0	2	1	8
Has Complete InterOptions	12	0	2	23	0	2	16	55
Has Registered PLATO	6	0	0	2	0	2	0	10
Has Completed Self-Assessment	7	0	0	14	0	2	8	31
Total learners	19	2	5	24	1	3	20	74



## ATTACHMENT 10

### Estimated time commitments

[The following estimates were developed by an ESPORT user during the project. While not empirically tested, the project manager believes the totals and the rationale for the time spent are sound.]

I would definitely like to spend more time in each stage of the preparation and feedback if more time were available. Preferably, I would like to allocate for each client:

- **Preparing and engaging client** – (1 hr)
- **Registration and Introduction** of the program – (1 hr)
- **Interest Inventory** – (1 hr)
- **Walking client through the essential skills / areas of self-assessment** – (2 hrs)
- **Guiding client through choosing an occupation and using resources** – (2 – 3 hrs)
- **Portfolio building** – Clients spent a lot of time in building the portfolio. They had difficulty in putting ideas into words. Much more input from the counselor is required. I have come to realize that I did not spend enough time with my clients when they were building their portfolio in terms of guidance and assistance. – (3 – 4 hr) More time will be required if the client wants to build more than one portfolio.
- **Learning Plan** – (2 hrs)
- **Review /interpret Portfolio** and follow-up plan – (2 hrs)

Total: **14 – 16** hours (This does not include time spent on guidance throughout the implementation of the Learning Plan.)